



Five Views: An Ethnic
Historic Site Survey for
California

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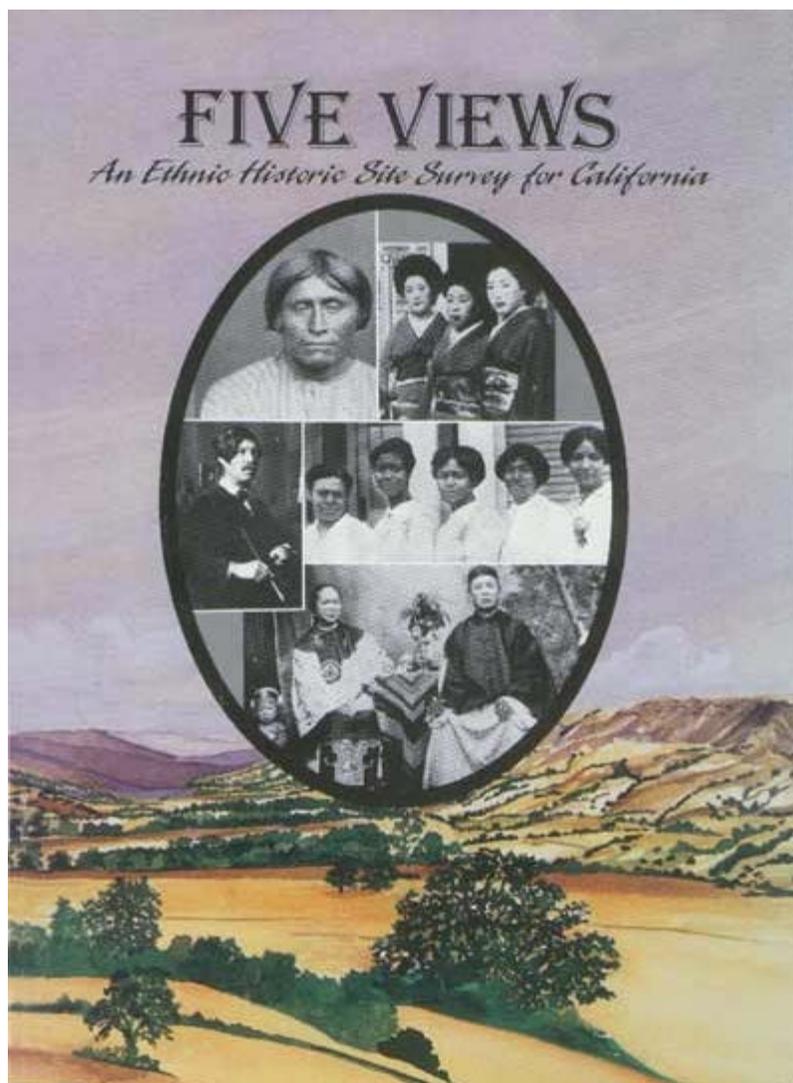
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FIVE VIEWS: An Ethnic Historic Site Survey for California

California Department of Parks and Recreation
Office of Historic Preservation
December, 1988

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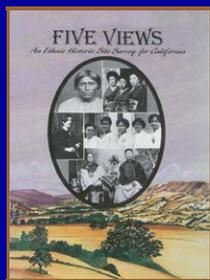
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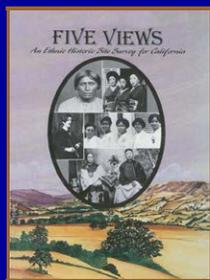




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FOREWORD

This survey was originally conceived in order to broaden the spectrum of ethnic community participation in historic preservation activities and to provide better information on ethnic history and associated sites. This information will help planners identify and evaluate ethnic properties, which have generally been under represented on historic property surveys. Most surveys record architecturally distinguished or widely known buildings, but ethnic properties are often modest structures or important because of people or events less familiar to many. Most of all, the public needed the opportunity to become more aware of California's cultural diversity and its tangible manifestations on the land.

In response to legislative action, in 1979, the California Office of Historic Preservation took the lead to improve representation of ethnic minority properties in cultural resource surveys. For this first effort, California's five largest minority present during the 50 years after 1848 were chosen. Following recruitment in search of the best possible experts for each subject area, contacts were awarded and the surveys were done. The surveys consisted of a narrative history and one hundred recorded sites, one-quarter of which were described in the final report.

The authors of each survey expressed their own views, and although the report has been edited for clarity and consistency, their conclusions have not been revised or altered. Their statements do not necessarily represent the position or opinions of the State of California or any of its official representatives. The various chapters should, therefore, be looked upon as individual statements, presented as a public service without copyright restrictions. Use of this material is encouraged, with credit to the California Department of Parks and Recreation and the authors themselves.

The survey should be useful in a variety of ways to researchers, schools, government agencies, historic preservation organizations, and ethnic communities. We hope that it will stimulate interest and action among groups in California and in other states. Most of all we hope that it will help people more fully recognize and appreciate the accomplishments and contributions of California's varied communities.

In any case, it is important to remember that this report is only a beginning, one step in an ongoing process. It raises more questions than it answers. What other groups should be studied? How are these five groups alike or different? Are there universal themes? What other factors could be explored? How do the groups' histories interrelate? Are there other sites that should be preserved or recognized?

While this report provides a starting point for further research, its existence should demonstrate the effort being made to more fully recognize California's ethnic diversity and the contributions that have been made to our heritage by Californians of widely differing backgrounds.

Henry R. Agonia, Director
California Department of Parks and Recreation

Kathryn Gualtieri
State Historic Preservation Officer

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A History of American Indians in California: INTRODUCTION

The history of California Indians is a different story from that of other ethnic groups who came in the last few centuries as immigrants to an already populated land. For Indians, this is their homeland, and their history spans more than 10,000 years of occupation. Unlike other groups who came to California to gain wealth or to escape undesirable conditions, California Indians lived in a land of plenty. Their material technology reflected what was necessary to meet their needs.

While people often write about how Indians developed a means of living in harmony with their environment, this cultural lifestyle was more a reflection of numbers, the carrying capacity of the land, and personal needs. What might have happened if Europeans had not arrived cannot be determined. However, just as in the case of many other societies, we can assume that, as their numbers and needs increased, greater pressure would have been put on the environment. Indians would have adapted or ceased to exist.

California Indians, like American Indians in general, have been the subject of many books and studies. The written record shows that in California alone there were hundreds of small groups, speaking more than 100 languages. Unlike the present population of California, the Indians lived well within the capacity of their environment. They developed religious systems and social norms, and they traded with their neighbors for goods or services not available in their own communities. They did what was necessary to survive.

A number of good source books have been written about California Indian life before the coming of European people and culture. Books that offer a wealth of information include the following:

Alfred Louis Kroeber, *Handbook of the Indians of California*

Robert F. Heizer, et al., *Handbook of North American Indians:*
Vol. 8

Robert F. Heizer and M. A. Whipple, *The California Indians; A
Source Book*

But this report is not about the prehistory of California Indians, nor is it the story of any one Indian group. Rather, it is a commentary on those events, procedures, laws, and situations that confronted and greatly affected California Indians and their ability to survive once Europeans arrived. The reason it is important to tell this aspect of Indian history, rather than the more romantic story of how Indians lived in harmony with nature, is the same reason it is important to tell the history of any people — so we can learn from the mistakes

of the past and try not to make those same mistakes in the future. Finally, we tell this history so that Indian people and non-Indian people might better understand why Indians have evolved as they have — why they are people attempting to retain their cultural identity while surviving in the modern world.

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A History of American Indians in California: PRE-1769

Most historians agree that Portuguese-born Juan Rodriquez Cabrillo was the first European to explore California. Sailing under the Spanish flag in 1542, Cabrillo hoped to find the northwest passage; instead, he found the California coast and claimed the new-found land for Spain. With his entrance into California, the course of California Indian history changed drastically.

"Traditionally, California Indians have been portrayed in history as a docile primitive people, who openly embraced the invading Spaniards and were rapidly subdued. This simplistic contention adds little to a realistic understanding of native history in California and undoubtedly is derived from crude feelings of racial superiority on the part of its advocates." (Heizer, 1978:99) The relationship between the Spanish and the Indians was not a peaceful co-existence. Rather, the history of California Indians is the story of an attempt to survive a series of invasions and the hardships that ensued.

In 1579, an Englishman, Sir Francis Drake, sailed into California. While much discussion has occurred as to exactly where Drake anchored, it is known that he spent five weeks among the California natives. Before leaving, he claimed the whole territory for the English Crown. He based his claim on the "right of discovery." Thus, within the first 40 years of European influence in California, two countries had claimed the land, and neither had acknowledged the rights of the natives who had resided on it for thousands of years.

Other explorers of early California included Pedro de Unamuno in 1587, Sebastian Rodriquez Cermeno in 1595, and Sebastian Vizcaino in 1602-1603. While none of these early explorers stayed very long or developed any framework for the establishment of permanent settlements, their visits had a lasting effect.

The theoretical question of land ownership brought about by Spanish and English claims to California and by non-acknowledgment of the rights of the Indians was overshadowed in practical reality by the introduction of disease. It cannot be determined at this time exactly what effects early explorers and the introduction of their diseases had on California Indians during the early exploration periods, It is certain, however, is that European diseases eventually devastated the Indian population.



Manchester Round House, Mendocino County

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A History of American Indians in California: 1769-1848

On July 16, 1769, the Spanish founded the first mission in California. It has been estimated that there were about 310,000 Indians living in California at the time. (Cook, 1962:92) However, over the next 80 years, this number was to change drastically, along with the lifestyle and culture of the Indians.

"Spain's Indian policy at the time of the invasion of California was a mixture of economic, military, political, and religious motives. Indians were regarded by the Spanish government as subjects of the Crown and human beings capable of receiving the sacraments of Christianity." (Heizer, 1978:100) "It was essential under 'missionization' that California Indians be 'reduced' into settled and stable communities where they would become good subjects of the King and children of God. Missionization required a brutal lifestyle akin in several respects to the forced movement of black people from Africa to the American South." (Archibold, 1978:172) Thus, "it should be clear, then, that the missions of California were not solely religious institutions. They were, on the contrary, instruments designed to bring about a total change in culture in a brief period of time." (Forbes, 1969:29)

The missions were built with Indian labor. This seems ironic given the devastating effect the mission system had on Indian population and culture, but it must be remembered that the Spanish saw the Indian neophytes (a neophyte is a new religious convert) as "little more than an energy source which cost nothing to acquire and nothing to maintain — they were an expendable resource. If the mission system had been progressive, if the priests (and the Mexican Presidents) had been able to learn from observation and experience, and thus allow changes to occur which would have been accommodations to problems of managing the neophyte populations, then there could have developed an operation which would have become more humane, and more consistent with doctrinal theory." (Banning, 1978:136)

From 1769 to 1800, the California coast was under Spanish control from as far north as San Francisco to San Diego in the south. However, this was not accomplished without a certain amount of resistance. Within a month after establishment of the San Diego mission in 1769, the Indians "attacked the Spanish camp, attempting to drive the invaders from their territory. But the Spanish soldiers, using guns, defended their settlement and an uneasy peace ensued. Yet, it would be another two years before Mission San Diego could record its first baptism." (Heizer, 1978:101)

Throughout the mission period, Indians resisted Spanish rule. "One of the earliest and most successful demonstrations of native resistance to colonization

was the destruction of Mission San Diego on November 4, 1775. Under the leadership of the neophyte Francisco of the Cuiamac Rancheria, the Ipai-Tipai organized nine villages into a force of about 800 men who not only completely destroyed the mission but also killed three Hispanos including Padre Jaime." (Heizer, 1978:103)

Not every resistance effort was violent. "The natives, Christian and gentile, caused more trouble in the region of San Francisco than in any other part of California. . . . In September of the same year 1795 over two hundred natives deserted from San Francisco, different parties in different directions, the number including many old neophytes who had always been faithful before." (Bancroft, 1963:708-709) Resistance occurred throughout the mission period, but the clerico-military administration did not tolerate even non-violent resistance. They responded by attempting to prevent escapes, sending out armed parties to capture runaways, and punishing recaptured runaways.

When Indians did resist, they did not go unpunished; in many instances, it was punishment that caused the resistance. "Perhaps the most spectacular Indian rebellion in California during this era was the 1824 revolt at Missions La Purisima and Santa Barbara. The reason for the revolt was ill treatment and forced labor imposed by the soldiers and priests upon neophytes in the area, but the immediate cause was a fight that broke out at the flogging of a La Purisima neophyte at Santa Ynez in February. Apparently no one was killed but a large part of the mission buildings was destroyed by fire. That same afternoon as many as 2,000 Indians attacked and captured Mission La Purisima. . . . It was not until March 16 that the Spanish soldiers attacked the 400 defenders at La Purisima with hundreds of armed and mounted men and four pounder guns." (Heizer, 1978:103) The Indians who led the rebellion were punished. Seven Indians were put to death, while many others were imprisoned and required to do hard labor.

Another form of resistance involved the retention of native religious activities. "In general, the natives did their best to secretly preserve their ancient religion in the missions, although it became increasingly difficult to do so. Native revivals are known to have occurred as in the Santa Barbara area in 1801." (Forbes, 1969:35)

In looking at the mission system, it is easy to understand why the Indians resisted. In 1786, Jean Francois Galaup de La Perouse, a French navigator, made the following report. On the way into church, he passed a place where Indians were seated in rows by sex. "We repassed, on going out of church, the same row of male and female Indians, who had never quitted their post during Te Deum; the children only had removed a little. . . . On the right stands the Indian Village, consisting of about fifty cabins, which serve as dwelling places to seven hundred and forty persons of both sexes, comprising their children, which compose the mission. . . . These cabins are the most miserable that are to be met among any people; they are round, six feet in diameter by four in height. . . . The men and women are assembled by the sound of the bell. One of the religious conducts them to their work, to church, and to all their other exercises. We mention it with pain, the resemblance so perfect, that we saw men and women loaded with irons, others in the stocks; and at length the noise of the strokes of a whip struck our ears, this punishment being also admitted, but not exercised with much severity." (Fehrenbacher, 1964:100-101) Whether or not the flogging was exercised with "severity" is not the point, but rather,

was this form of punishment necessary?

In 1799, Padre Antonio de la Concepcion Horra of Mission San Miguel enraged his contemporaries by reporting to the viceroy in Mexico, "The treatment shown to the Indians is the most cruel I have ever read in history. For the slightest things, they receive heavy flogging, are shackled and put in the stocks, and treated with so much cruelty that they are kept whole days without water.' The unfortunate padre was quickly isolated, declared insane, and taken under armed guard out of California." (Heizer, 1978:102) Other conditions that made the mission intolerable to the Indians included overcrowding, lack of native foods, and the weather (especially for inland Indians who were required to live on the coast for the entire year).

During the mission period, disease played a significant role in the reduction of the native population. Three major epidemics broke out during the Spanish period. In 1777, there was a respiratory epidemic; in 1802, a pneumonia and diphtheria epidemic; and in 1806, a measles epidemic. However, diseases were not the only cause for the rapid decline of the Indian population while under mission rule. Much of the decline can be attributed to changes in diet and inadequate nutrition. (Heizer, 1978:102-103) In 1818, Governor Vicente de Sola reported that 64,000 Indians had been baptized, and that 41,000 were dead. (Forbes, 1969:37)

Not everything was negative under Spanish and Mexican rule. In 1824, the constitution guaranteed citizenship to "all persons." While neither the Spanish nor the Mexicans acknowledged Indian land ownership, they did provide the natives with the right to continue to occupy their villages. Indians were also introduced to farming, and although both farming and cattle grazing had a devastating effect on the native habitat, the farming experience itself provided Indians with the skills necessary to survive in the upcoming years. During this period, many native people also learned crafts that helped them find employment once the Americans arrived.

Following Mexico's independence from Spain in 1821, there was a shift in the entire approach to Indian policy taken by the government. "In 1825 Lt. Col. Jose Maria Echeandia was appointed in Mexico to be governor of California and when he came north he brought with him new ideas of Mexican republicanism. . . . He also wished to abolish the missions. . . . In 1834-1836 Governor Jose Figueroa was finally forced by the Mexican government . . . to commence the formal secularization of the missions." (Forbes, 1969:39) The process of secularization provided that one half of the mission property would go to support the Indians, and half to support the priests and other officials. During this time, "the entire economy of the Mexican colony now shifted from the missions to the large landed estates of wealthy Mexicans." (Heizer, 1978:105)

As government emphasis changed from a mission approach to private enterprise, large land grants were given to Mexican citizens. This was necessary in order to put additional lands under Mexican rule. Naturalized citizens including John Marsh, John Sutter, John Bidwell, and others were awarded large land grants to settle for Mexico. "During the years 1830 to 1846 the interior native population suffered more extensively from brutality and violence than might perhaps be anticipated. Violence was a critical factor among tribes that resisted. . . One such filibustering expedition was led by Jose

Maria Amador in 1837. . . According to Amador, his party:

' . . . invited the wild Indians and their Christian companions to come and have a feast of pinole and dried meat . . . the troops, the civilians, and the auxiliaries surrounded them and tied them up . . . we separated 100 Christians. At every half mile or mile we put six of them on their knees to say their prayers, making them understand that they were about to die. Each one was shot with four arrows. . . . Those who refused to die immediately were killed with spears. . . . We baptized all the Indians (non-Christians) and afterward they were shot in the back.'" (Heizer, 1978:105-106)

However, disease had a much greater effect on Indians than any act of violence. During this period, smallpox and scarlet fever had a devastating effect on the native population, killing thousands.

With the ranchos came a need for a labor force. Much like the missions, the ranchos used Indians to meet this need. Major landowners took advantage of the lack of unity among Indian groups. For example, they would make pacts with one Indian group, then require them to bring in other Indians to serve as laborers. Once the landowners had organized their labor force, they would exchange labor with other ranchers. Thus developed a system of labor that was virtually cost-free.

Another example of how Mexican landowners worked this labor system to their advantage is the case of Charles Weber. In 1845, Weber purchased William Gulnac's interest in a ranch in the area now known as Stockton. For 200 pesos, Weber purchased the land which Gulnac could not settle because of Indian resistance. On his arrival, he employed the same system John Sutter had used and made a pact with an Indian leader, Jose Jesus, an ex-mission neophyte. Jesus provided Weber with labor in exchange for goods. This type of arrangement became increasingly advantageous to Indians, because if they did not enter into a pact, the landowners would raid their villages and take the labor they needed anyway.

In February 1848, the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo ceded sovereignty of Mexican lands, including California, to the United States. However, before the constitutional ideology of the American government could take effect here, the discovery of gold turned California into a land of confusion. After James Marshall's initial discovery, John Sutter and Charles Weber used Indians to mine the precious ore. As news of the discovery spread and more Europeans arrived in California, the Indians were soon forced out of mining. Initially, a group of men from Oregon ran the Indians out of the mines because they believed the jobs rightfully belonged to White men. With the miners' search for gold, the Sierra and other remote areas where Indians had retreated became prime locations for establishing claims. The dramatic rise in the White population during this era all but ensured the end of the claim to California by the Indians.

In summary, this era saw the beginning and the end of the mission period. Because of disease, homicide, and loss of their native environment and food sources, the Indian population in California decreased from 310,000 to approximately 100,000. With the secularization of the missions, the Indians were confronted with new problems of private ownership. In 1848, California

came under the authority of the United States, and just as the Indians were becoming accustomed to the rancho system, the gold rush brought about a new era of Indian-settler relations.



Sierra Mono Museum, Madera County

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A History of American Indians in California: 1849-1879

Before 1845, the Spanish/Mexican population of California numbered only a few thousand. But by 1849, during the gold rush, the non-Indian population of California had grown to 100,000. The Indian population was already in a weakened condition, suffering from disease and lack of food, and from violent confrontations with the new landowners. Once the Americans arrived, California Indians were at an even greater disadvantage. With the lure of instant wealth in front of them, the new settlers wanted little to do with the Indians. The American approach to dealing with the Indians was summed up best by California historian Hubert Howe Bancroft:

That part of the early intercourse between aboriginal Americans and European which belongs to history may be briefly given, short work was made of it in California. The savages were in the way; the miners and settlers were arrogant and impatient; there were no missionaries or others present with even the poor pretense of soul saving or civilizing. It was one of the last human hunts of civilization, and the basest and most brutal of them all. (Bancroft, 1963a:474)

"The Indians had a precisely balanced relationship with their food supply. Soon after the arrival of the Americans serious depletion of that supply began to occur: mining operations adversely affected salmon fishing and destroyed fish dams." (Heizer, 1978:108) On the Americans' arrival, the large ranchos were broken up, and the new, more numerous landowners on smaller parcels of land were less tolerant of Indians. The small ranchos were farmed and grazed more intensively, and this caused an even greater reduction in the Indians' natural food supply. Jobs once belonging to Indians, especially skilled jobs, were taken by Whites.

We need only look at the early record of the California Legislature to understand the relationship of the Americans to the native population during this era. At the first State Constitutional Convention, those assembled voted to eliminate the Indians' right to vote because they feared the control Indians might exercise. In 1850, An Act for the Government and Protection of Indians was enacted by the first session of the State Legislature. This law set the tone for Indian-White relations to come.

The act provided for the following:

1. The Justice of the Peace would have jurisdiction over all complaints between Indians and Whites; "but in no case shall a white man be

convicted of any offense upon the testimony of an Indian or Indians."

2. Landowners would permit Indians who were peaceably residing on their land to continue to do so.
3. Whites would be able to obtain control of Indian children. (This section would eventually be used to justify and provide for Indian slavery.)
4. If any Indian was convicted of a crime, any White person could come before the court and contract for the Indian's services, and in return, would pay the Indian's fine.
5. It would be illegal to sell or administer alcohol to Indians.
6. Indians convicted of stealing a horse, mule, cow, or any other valuable could receive any number of lashes not to exceed 25, and fines not to exceed \$200. (It should be noted that the law provided that abusing an Indian child by Whites was to be punished by no more than a \$10 fine. It is hard to compare the penalty with the crime.)
7. Finally, an Indian found strolling, loitering where alcohol was sold, begging, or leading a profligate course of life would be liable for arrest. The justice, mayor, or recorder would make out a warrant. Within 24 hours, the services of the Indian in question could be sold to the highest bidder. The term of service would not exceed four months.

This law was widely abused with regard to the use of Indians as laborers, though it did allow Indians to reside on private land.

During 1851 and 1852, the California Legislature authorized payment of \$1,100,000 for the "suppression of Indian hostilities. Again, in 1857, the Legislature issued bonds for \$410,000 for the same purpose." (Heizer, 1978:108) While theoretically attempting to resolve White-Indian conflicts, these payments only encouraged Whites to form volunteer companies and try to eliminate all the Indians in California.

In 1860, the law of 1850 was amended to state that Indian children and any vagrant Indian could be put under the custody of Whites for the purpose of employment and training. Under the law, it was possible to retain the service of Indians until 40 years of age for men and 35 years of age for women. This continued the practice of Indian slavery and made it legal for Indians to be retained for a longer period of time and be taken at a younger age.

In 1862, the *Alta California* reported: "Little more than a hundred miles from San Francisco, in Mendocino County, the practice of Indian stealing is still extensively carried out. Only recently, George H. Woodman was caught near Ukiah with sixteen Indian children, as he was about to take them out of the county for sale. It is well known that a number of men in that region have for years made it their profession to capture and sell unfortunate juveniles, the price ranging from \$30 to \$150 depending on their quality." (Harrison, 1966:4)

This was not an isolated situation. U.S. Agent George Hanson reported: "A band of desperate men have carried on a system of kidnapping for two years past. Indian children were seized and carried into lower counties and sold into virtual slavery. . . . The kidnapers follow at the heels of the soldiers to seize

these children when their parents are murdered to sell them at the best advantage." (Balin, 1971:18) When there was no other way, there was "a class of whites who systematically killed adults to get their children." (*Ibid.*, p. 19)

The other practice that provided much of the labor force, especially in southern California, was to have city officials pick up Indians as vagrants. These officials would then turn the Indians over to the ranchers and other people who needed laborers. This was all done under the provisions of the 1850 law. After four months or some other term of service, the employer would return the Indians to the city, usually to a place where alcohol was served. Shortly after their return, the Indians would be picked up once again as vagrants, and returned to the labor force.

These types of activities occurred until 1866, when, to comply with the 14th Amendment of the United States Constitution, the State Legislature repealed the law. The 14th Amendment provides that no state should infringe on any citizen's "privileges or immunities" nor "deprive any person of life, liberty, or property without due process of law," nor deny to any person "the equal protection of the law."

While the state was enslaving and eliminating California natives, the federal government, in 1851, appointed three commissioners to negotiate treaties with California Indians. By 1852, 18 treaties had been negotiated with 139 tribes. The treaties were negotiated because the federal government perceived Indian tribes as foreign nations, and treaties were the legal means for developing an agreement and ensuring peace with them. The 18 treaties set aside 7,488,000 acres of land, or approximately one-third of California, for Indian use. This land settlement was similar to that negotiated with other tribes in other states. The treaties also provided funds for materials and food to allow the Indians to become self-sufficient. The treaties met with hostility in California. On January 16 and February 11, 1852, the State Senate concluded that the treaties "committed an error in assigning large portions of the richest mineral and agricultural lands to the Indians, who did not appreciate the land's value." (Ellison, 1925:4-5) The legislature instructed the United States senators from California to oppose ratification of the treaties, and called for the government to remove the Indians from the state as they had done in other states.

In February 1852, President Millard Fillmore submitted the 18 treaties to the United States Senate for ratification. The California senators were recognized and the Senate went into secret session to discuss the treaties. During this session, the Senate failed to ratify the treaties, and by order, they were placed in secret files, where they remained for the next 53 years. In 1871, the United States Congress declared that it would no longer negotiate treaties with American Indians.

Although the United States Government failed to ratify the treaties, it did continue the policy of setting up reservations and moving the Indians to them. However, no attempt was made to negotiate new treaties. In 1852, while not acknowledging any claims of California Indians to the land, the United States appointed Edward F. Beale as the first Superintendent of Indian Affairs in California. Beale's plan was to establish five reserves on which the Indians would reside. Congress appropriated \$250,000, and in September 1853, Beale gathered some 2,000 Indians and established the 50,000-acre Tejon Reserve. By focusing all his effort at Tejon, Beale neglected some 61,000 hungry

natives. "Beale declared that humanity must yield to necessity, they are not dangerous, therefore they must be neglected." (Heizer, 1978:110) In 1854, Beale was removed from his post. However, based on the information he acquired as superintendent, Beale eventually gained control of the reservation land.

Congress appointed Col. Thomas J. Henley as the new superintendent in 1854. Henley, following Beale's original plan, established the Nome Lackee Reservation; Nome Cult, Mendocino; Fresno Indian Farm; and Kings River Indian Farm. However, Henley did not act in the best interest of California Indians. The reservations suffered from lack of water. Squatters grazed their cattle on the unfenced land and destroyed crops that were being raised to support the Indians. "Most of these squatters were business partners or relatives of Henley and, therefore, impossible to remove." (Heizer, 1978:110) It is important to note that all of these early reserves eventually left federal ownership, and the Indians who resided on them were once again forced to move to other lands to make new homes. Every time Indians were removed, the commissioners prospered.

In 1870, in an attempt to get away from corrupt superintendents and to convert the Indians to Christianity, the federal government turned over operation of the reservations to the Quaker Church. In California, the Methodists, Baptists, and other churches eventually took on management of the reservations. While the new management was not corrupt and was far better for the general welfare of the Indians, the church was less tolerant of Indians continuing their traditional beliefs. Thus, the reservations became missions and the first tools under American control to be used in assimilating Indians into the general population. Once again, California Indians were confronted with change and forced to adapt from being prisoners-of-war to being wards of the church.

The 1870s saw two other important events in California Indian history. The first event centered on a Nevada Indian prophet who proclaimed that the end of the world was near. "The most consistent manifestation of this resurgence of native religion was the belief the end of the world was near and that the dead would return with the disappearance of the whites." (Heizer, 1978:113) Part of the effort in the attempt to eliminate the Whites was to sing and dance the traditional songs. While the prophet's dreams were never realized, the Ghost Dance, as it was called, spread throughout much of California. While the return to religious activities did not result in the return of the dead, it did encourage traditional activities among the California Indians. The second event was the Modoc War of 1872-73. A group of Modoc Indians, led by Captain Jack, fought the United States Army from a lava bed stronghold. Even though the Modocs were greatly outnumbered, it took the army more than a year to squash the rebellion. This was the last armed resistance by California Indians.

In 1872, the California Constitution was amended to allow Indians to testify in courts of law. Up to this point "his testimony was not admissible in evidence. Not being a reservation Indian, he could not appeal to the United States courts, and, [was] ignored by both State and Nation. . . ." (Northern California Indian Association, 1906)

In summary, this period saw the establishment of California as a state. With statehood, laws were passed that infringed on the rights of Indian people to occupy their homelands, and caused them to be used much like slaves. It was

not until the enactment of the 14th Amendment that these rights were restored. Treaties were negotiated and rejected; reservations established, dissolved, and reinstated; and Indians were still in a period of unrest.



Kindergarten class at play [circa 1900]

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History



A History of American Indians in California: 1880-1904

In the 1880s, there was increased public awareness of the problems California Indians were confronting. While the problems were rarely analyzed, many people helped to improve the quality of life for Indians. There was an effort to improve the education of Indians through schools, and to provide them with land to better their economic conditions so that Indians could become full citizens of the United States of America.

In the early 1880s, Helen Hunt Jackson wrote *A Century of Dishonor* and sent a copy of her book to each United States congressman. She was then appointed to a commission to examine the condition of Indians in Southern California. Her visits resulted in *The Report on the Condition and Needs of the Mission Indians of California*, by special agents Helen Jackson and Abbot Kinney. The report summarized the problems and concerns of Southern California Indians; many of the conditions outlined in the report, however, were applicable to all California Indians. The report noted that Indians had been continually displaced from their land. She also noted that while many Indians had taken "immoral" paths, others had chosen the responsibilities of herding animals and raising crops. In her report, she also noted that the United States government had done little to right the wrongs of the past. While Jackson did not solve all the problems of Southern California Indians, her work did bring their concerns to the attention of the American public and Congress.

One recurring concern was the lack of education and training necessary for survival in American society. The government, as well as Jackson, saw education as a way of assimilating Indians into the mainstream of United States society. Reports from the Secretary of the Interior and the Bureau of Indian Affairs at that time expressed the goals of the government in relation to the educational process. In 1908, one report stated, "the rooms held three or four each and it was arranged that no two tribes were placed in the same room. This not only helped in the acquirement of English, but broke up tribal and race clannishness, a most important victory in getting Indians toward real citizens." (Spicer, 1969:235) An earlier report stated, "I can see no reason why a strong government like ours should not govern and control them [Indians] and compel each one to settle down and stay in one place, his own homestead, wear the white man's clothing, labor for his own support, and send his children to school." (Spicer, 1969:236) Other people had even stronger ideas. For instance, George Ellis, in his book, *The Red Man and the White Man in North America*, wrote, "The Indian must be made to feel he is in the grasp of a superior." (Ellis 1882:572) In opposition to this view, the Indian Rights Association was formed in 1882. This Indian advocate group would play a

powerful role in formulating Indian policy in upcoming years.

While the approaches differed, all agreed that education was necessary. "In California, three types of educational programs were established for native peoples. The first was the Federal Government reservation day school. The second type was the boarding school, fashioned after Carlisle. And finally, the nearby public school that allowed Indians to attend began a slow, though steady, increase in popularity among policy makers." (Heizer, 1978:115) While the public schools seemed the best alternative, most Indians did not have the right to attend these schools until the 1920s.

In 1881, an elementary school system for Indians was established in California. However, the Indians soon recognized that the schools were a threat to their culture, as well as to the tribe as a political unit. "As a result, considerable resistance to the schools developed. Native peoples destroyed the day school at Potrero in 1888, and burned the school at Tule River in 1890. At Pachanga, a Luiseno named Ventura Molido, burned the school and assassinated the school teacher in 1895." (Heizer, 1978:115) Much of the destruction and violence could have been avoided if the school system and the government had recognized the great importance the Indians placed on being able to maintain their cultural beliefs. In 1891, school attendance was made mandatory. But while attendance was mandatory, there were still Indian children who did not attend.

In 1901, the first Indian hospital in California was established at Sherman Institute in Riverside. Sherman later became a boarding school for Indian children. While hospitals and other facilities improved conditions for California Indians, most Indians were still without homes.

During this period, another major focus was on the acquisition of land for Indians. Probably the most interesting example of the way land was acquired is evidenced by the Yokayo Pomo in 1881: "After collecting nearly \$1,000 from their people, the head man selected a 120-acre site near the Russian River and made the down payment. The Yokayo groups prospered; they paid the entire balance owed on their land, and even saved enough to purchase farm machinery shortly thereafter." (Heizer, 1978:118)

A major tool the government used in trying to assimilate Indians during this time was the General Allotment Act of 1887, also known as the Dawes Act, which appeared to be generally advantageous to Indians. However, the major intent of the act was to break down the role of tribal government. The act itself provided that each Indian living on a reservation would receive a 160-acre allotment of land per family unit, and each single man would receive 80 acres if the reservation had enough land. If there was not enough land, other provisions were made. Indians not residing on a reservation would be entitled to settle on any surveyed or unsurveyed government lands not appropriated. The lands allotted would be held in trust for 25 years by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. If all other provisions of the act were met, that is, if the Indians made use of the lands for agriculture and became self-sufficient, then the land would become the property of the individual. "Native people understood full well the implications of allotment and offered considerable resistance. Nevertheless, the Bureau of Indian Affairs began ordering allotments of various sizes at Rincon, Morongo, and Pala Reservations in 1893. . . . The next year, allotments were begun at Round Valley Reservation. By the turn of the century, 1,614

individual allotments were made among eight reservations in the state." (Heizer, 1978:117)

Long before the passage of the Dawes Act, people recognized that problems would occur from its implementation. In 1881, Senator Henry Moore Teller of Colorado spoke in opposition to an earlier form of the Allotment Act. Senator Teller concluded, "If I stand alone in the Senate, I want to put upon the record my prophecy in this matter, that when 30 or 40 years shall have passed and these Indians shall have parted with their title, they will curse the hand that was raised professedly in their defense to secure this kind of legislation, and if the people who are clamoring for it understood Indian character and Indian laws, and Indian morals, and Indian religion, they would not be here clamoring for this at all." (Spicer, 1969:234) The senator would soon be proven correct.

Other Indians, such as the Cupenos from Warner Springs, chose to fight for their lands in the courts. With the assistance of the Indian Rights Association, they began a suit to stop their eviction from their home at the Warner Ranch. In 1888, they won a favorable decision which temporarily stopped their eviction. However, the case was appealed to the United States Supreme Court, and in 1903, the Cupenos were evicted from their home.

Still other Indians chose to purchase land which was once theirs and reside on it. However, not every transaction was fair. In 1904, the *San Francisco Chronicle* reported that Indians who bought land from Whites were being dispossessed by the heirs of the granters, who gave no valid titles. "The Northern California Indian Association reported that about 10,000 Indians lived on land to which whites hold title. They were subject to eviction 'at any time.' The Indians are recognized for what they are not, usually competent to compete with white men in economic struggle. . . . Congress should buy lands for Indians in locations where they now are and allot them small farms in severalty. . . . It is also asked that their status as to citizenship be satisfactorily established. This petition is now before congress. It should be granted for justice and honesty. . . ." (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 1904).

The struggle for homes would continue.



Smith River Shaker Church, Del Norte County

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History



A History of American Indians in California: 1905-1933

In 1905, Indians became more involved in matters concerning them. With the rediscovery of the 18 lost treaties, Indians and their supporters began a drive for land, better education, the rights of citizenship, and settlement of the unfulfilled treaty conditions. This period held victories for Indians as well as the beginning of many battles that would take a long time to resolve.

"Senate action on the treaties was secret. And thus the matter rested, gathering dust in the archives of the government until clerks working in the secret Senate files found the slumbering treaties. That was in 1905." (Footnight, 1954:24) Thus the California land claims case began. As early as 1909, the Commonwealth Club of San Francisco was looking into the matter of Indian rights under the 18 treaties. "And in 1924 a special section on Indian Affairs was formed for the purpose of making a complete study of the rights, wrongs, and present condition of California Indians." (Johnson, 1966:36)

"Another group that was active in this area was the Native Sons of the Golden West. Study committees were formed and publicity as to the needs of the California Indians appeared in its magazine, *The California Grizzly Bear*. In 1922 and again in 1925, there were articles of real importance in arousing public opinion. There were many other groups active in the cause of the California Indians: among them were the Indian Welfare Committee of the Federated Women's Clubs, the California Indian Rights Association, Inc., the Northern California Indian Association, the Mission Indian Federation, and the Women's Christian Temperance Union." (Johnson, 1966:36)

"The early 1920s witnessed the evolution of the powerful Mission Indian Federation in southern California. The Federation was headed by a White man, Jonathan Tibbets of Riverside, but like the Indian Board of Cooperation, the Federation had a large body of Indian members. Non-Indians dominated many meetings and urged the membership to follow their advice. However, the Bureau of Indian Affairs soon grew intolerant of all these Indian concern groups and provoked an incident that persuaded many people that Indian grievances were indeed legitimate. 'At the Federal meetings expressions of ill will or hostility to the government were occasionally heard. Grievances were aired and complaints, both legitimate and trivial, were uttered. As a result and under orders of the Department of Justice, some 57 Indians were placed under arrest on the charge of conspiracy against the government. Upon arraignment they were dismissed without bail.' " (Heizer, 1978:715)

Another organization which has already been mentioned was the Indian Board of Cooperation. The board was founded in 1910 by a Methodist minister,

Fredrick Collett. "The policy of the Board is to encourage the Indians to do for themselves everything that they can, and to assist them in the doing of these things that they can not do without help." The Board's objectives included organizing Indians, obtaining passage of a bill so Indians could present their claims to the United States Court of Claims, obtaining legal services, ensuring funds appropriated for Indians be used for the Indians' best interest, and promoting all movements intended to enhance the welfare of Indians. (*California Indian Herald*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 1923:11) In 1919, the board established auxiliaries which were small Indian organizations that acted on the local level and raised funds for the board through memberships and special events. The Indian Board of Cooperation assisted Indians on many issues over the next decades. By May 1924, the board boasted 88 auxiliaries, with a membership of 10,400. (*California Indian Herald*, 1924:2) While Indians could belong to the auxiliaries, the board was made up of Whites. Most of the funds the board used for operation were obtained from Indians who paid between four and six dollars each to be members. Thus, much of the cost of financing the early land claims case came from Indians themselves.

California Indians obtained the opportunity to file in the United States Court of Claims when the Indian Board of Cooperation assisted in filing what came to be known as the "Test Case." "The suit is brought as a test case to establish the rights of all tribes and bands of California Indians whose lands were taken from them without fair compensation." (*California Indian Herald*, 1923:4) The case involved 1,008 square miles located in the Klamath National Forest, in Humboldt and Siskiyou counties. The case asked what legal rights the government had to the land. While the Indians never won back the land in question, the case did raise an important question: Did Indians have a right to redress for the lands lost?

In 1927, the California Legislature enacted "An act to authorize the attorney general to bring suit against the United States in the court of claims in behalf of the Indians of the State of California in the event that the Congress of the United States authorizes the same." (Johnson, 1966:37) For the first time, California Indians had the support of the California Legislature in their effort to seek redress for the settlements made in the 18 treaties that were not ratified.

In 1928, the United States Congress passed the California Indian Jurisdictional Act, also known as the Lea Act. The law provided that ". . . by defining California Indians as those who resided in the state on June 1, 1852 and their descendants now living in the state. . . . All claims of whatsoever nature of the Indians . . . be submitted to the Court of Claims by the Attorney General of the State of California acting for and on behalf of said Indians . . . with the right of either party to appeal to the Supreme Court of the United States. . . . It is hereby declared that the loss to said Indians on account of their failure to secure the lands and compensation provided for in the eighteen unratified treaties is sufficient ground for equitable relief . . . the value of any lands so granted could not be in excess of \$1.25 per acre. (Johnson, 1966:37) The law signified the legal beginning of the land claims case. "While the Lea Act had, as indicated, some undesirable features, it was a step forward, as it was the first act of Congress of this nature after twenty years of effort." (Johnson, 1966:35)

"With the rediscovery, in 1905, of the 'lost' treaties of 1851, public opinion began to favor the Indians. Between 1906 and 1910, legislation was passed appropriating funds which were used to purchase many small tracts of land in

central and north central California for the landless Indians of those areas. These tracts today are the bulk of those Indian lands known as 'rancherias.' " (Bureau of Indian Affairs, 1966:13) While the act provided lands for many Indians, still others had to go to the legislature to ask for help. A 77-year-old Pit River man stated: "My people are homeless. They are driven from place to place by the white men on whose property they seek refuge. The Washington Government does not aid us. Our children are not wanted in the schools. We have no medical aid for our sick. We have no implements, nor lands for farming. My people are willing to work. Give us a place in the desert and we will be happy." (*California Indian Herald*, 1923:13) So even in the 1920s, the problem of homeless Indians continued though the issue of land was at last being addressed.

The lack of land was not the only problem confronting Indians. "General conditions in the Far West were far from good in 1919-1920, after more than a half-century of conquest. McDowell wrote in 1919 of the majority of California Indians 'that more than all else, they have for generations been treated by their white neighbors as an inferior people and have been accepting that appraisal quite as a matter of course. . . . They get their own living with the work of their own hands. . . . With apparently few exceptions, the California Indians are seasonal, or casual, work people. The earning time for the great majority is the growing seasons. . . . [Others] of them find employment in sawmills, on the surface of mines, in logging camps, and on railroads and public roads. During sheep shearing season these Indians are in demand. . . . They herd cattle, milk cows, and do general farm labor. The women who live near cities and towns go out by day as domestics and laundresses.'" (Forbes, 1969:74) The general welfare of California Indians continued to be poor, but they resumed their efforts to gain civil rights.

Indians began to view education differently in this era. Much of this change in attitude may have derived from the support groups that assisted them. While many Indians continued to attend boarding schools and day schools, more Indians began to attend public school in California. "In 1915 only 316 Indian pupils were attending public school in California but by 1919 this number had increased to 2199." (Forbes, 1967:73) In 1917, the federal government decided to have Indians attend public schools. Even after this policy was adopted, however, the right to attend public school was not granted to every Indian child. "Between the 1920's and early 1940's, the Bureau of Indian Affairs ceased to have any appreciable role in California-Nevada Indian education, thanks in great measure to Indian efforts to establish local public schools or to gain admittance to existing schools. The latter was facilitated by the case of Piper vs. Big Pine School District (1924) in which Indians won the right to attend public schools." (Forbes, 1969:118)

In 1917, a major victory for Indians occurred when the California Supreme Court decided that California Indians were citizens. In 1922, 50 Hoopa Indians took advantage of citizenship and voted in the general election. They had to travel 24 miles to do so, but "for the first time in their history voted as free-born American citizens." (*California Indian Herald*, 1923:14). While California Indians had been acknowledged as citizens, it was not until June 2, 1924 that the Indian Citizenship Act was passed. Among other things the Indian Citizenship Act contained one provision of special interest to California Indians: "That the granting of such citizenship shall not in any manner impair or otherwise affect the right of any to tribal or other property." The granting of

citizenship came 100 years after the Indians were first granted citizenship by the Mexican government. It also came after more than 10,000 Indians had fought in the First World War.

The granting of citizenship in 1924 should have guaranteed Indians their First Amendment right of religious freedom. However, as late as the 1920s, the Bureau of Indian Affairs made a deliberate effort to control and in some cases eliminate the Indians' ability to practice their religious beliefs. "On April 26, 1921, during the Secretaryship of Albert B. Fall, Commissioner Charles H. Burke of the Bureau of Indian Affairs addressed to all Indian Superintendents (Indian Agents) a document called Circular 1665. He stated: 'The sundance and all other similar dances and so called religious ceremonies are considered 'Indian Offenses' under existing regulations and corrective penalties are provided. I regard such restrictions as applicable to any (religious) dance which involves . . . the reckless giving away of property . . . frequent and prolonged periods of celebration . . . in fact, any disorderly or plainly excessive performance that promotes superstitions, cruelty, licentiousness, idleness, danger of health, and shiftless indifference of family welfare. In all such instance, the regulations should be enforced.'" (Indian Defense Association of Central and Northern California)

On February 14, 1923, a supplement to Circular 1665 was issued. Some of the main features of the amendment were that "Indian dances be limited to one day in the midweek and at one center of each district; the months of March, April, June, July and August being exempted (no dances in these months). That none take part in the dances or be present who are under 50 years of age. That a careful propaganda be undertaken to educate public opinion against the (Indian religious) dance." (*Ibid.*)

"Then on February 24, 1923, the Commissioner broadcasted a 'Message to All Indians.' It read: 'I could issue an order against these useless and harmful performances, but I would rather have you give them up of your own free will, and, therefore, I ask you in this letter to do so. If at the end of one year the reports which I receive show that you are doing as requested, I shall be glad, for I shall know that you are making progress — but if the reports show that you reject this plea, then some other course will have to be taken.'" (*Ibid.*)

The restriction on religion led John Collier to write: "Now today, this late date, the Indian Bureau has commenced a new onslaught. The Indians are deeply and universally religious. They still know how as tribes to follow ancient paths leading to the water of heaven. United in this life of religion, they can still stand up together as men, and they can still cling to their coveted remnants of soil. They can resist the efforts to turn them into drifting social half-breeds slave-driven by 6,000 Indian Bureau job holders who make their living 'civilizing' the Indians. Therefore, an actual inquisition shall be elaborated against their adult worship. Their treasure of the soul which no man yet has known enough to be able to estimate shall be forcibly thrown away; their last liberty and last dignity and their end of life, which they know to be God, shall be denied." (*Ibid.*)

So the passing of the Citizenship Act in 1924 meant much more than the right to vote; it meant that all constitutional guarantees would be afforded to this country's first inhabitants. While freedom of religion is one of those rights, it was more than 50 years before the Indians' constitutional right of religion

would be guaranteed.



Old School House at Ft. Bidwell, Modoc County

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History



A History of American Indians in California: 1934-1964

During the next three decades, California Indians continued to experience ups and downs. In 1934, two major pieces of legislation were enacted that affected California Indians: the Indian Reorganization Act and the Johnson-O'Malley Act. Of these, the Indian Reorganization Act probably had the more far-reaching effects. First, the act provided for keeping Indian land in trust; it returned to the tribe reservation land that remained surplus after allotments; and it restricted the granting of rights-of-way over reservation lands, restricted release of lands, and provided for the Secretary of the Interior to purchase inholdings in the reservation for Indian use. The act also ordered that forests on Indian lands be managed on a sustained-yield basis, authorized \$250,000 to defray the expenses of organizing Indian-chartered corporations or other organizations under the act, and provided \$10,000,000 for a revolving fund to promote economic development. Finally, the act provided for loans to Indians to attend trade or vocational schools.

"The viewpoint underlying the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 was most fully and clearly expressed by John Collier, as in this memorandum written while he was Commissioner of Indian Affairs in 1943: 'I see the broad function of Indian policy and Indian administration to be the development of Indian democracy and equality within the framework of American and world democracy. . . . The most significant clue to achieving full Indian democracy with and as a part of American democracy, is the continued survival, through all historical change and disaster, of the Indian Tribal group, both as a real entity and a legal entity. I suspect the reason we do not always give this fact the recognition it deserves is that we do not want to recognize it. . . . Congress through the Indian Reorganization Act, invoked the tribe as a democratic operational mechanism. . . . We can divest ourselves of the lingering fear that tribalism is a regression, and we can look upon it as a most important single step in assimilating Indians to modern democratic life. . . . Indians have the right of self-determination. . . . The Indian office is moving from guardian to advisor from administrator to friend in court (Spicer, 1969:247-248)

The Indian Reorganization Act was based on the assumption that the way to assimilate Indians into American society was to have tribal government work as a democracy, much as the United States government operates. This was a reversal in attitude from the Dawes Act of 1887, which attempted to disband Indian tribal organization. However, both acts sought in different ways the goal of Indian self-determination.

Another important piece of legislation was "the Johnson O'Malley Act which provided federal funding to local school districts to pay costs for reservation

residents in lieu of local taxes." (Heizer, 1978:125) This act removed the only remaining argument against Indian children attending public schools. It also provided that Indian children no longer needed to be moved long distances from their homes and families to attend school, even though some still chose to do so.

Toward the end of World War II and immediately thereafter, Indians began to establish organizations. The major difference between these organizations and earlier ones was that Indians governed them. Three important organizations that were established were the Native American Church, the National Congress of American Indians, and the Federated Indians of California.

The Congress of American Indians was established "to enlighten the public toward a better understanding of the Indian people; to preserve Indian cultural values; to seek an equitable adjustment to tribal affairs and tribal claims; to secure and to preserve rights under Indian treaties or agreements with the United States; to promote the common welfare of the American Indian; and to foster the continued loyalty and allegiance of the American Indians to the flag of the United States. . . ." (Spicer, 1969:290)

The Native American Church was established for a much different purpose, the advancement of Native American religion. The reasons for its establishment are found in the church's preamble and articles of incorporation, which state, "Whereas, The 'human rights' of all citizens of our country are guaranteed and protected by amendment 1 to the Constitution of our country . . . this corporation is formed to foster and promote religious believers in Almighty God and the customs of the several Tribes of Indians throughout the United States in the worship of a Heavenly Father and to promote morality, sobriety, industry, charity, and the right living and cultivate a spirit of self-respect and brotherly love and union among the members (Spicer, 1969:288)

Finally, the Federated Indians of California was established for a very specific reason. "In 1944 the Court of Claims awarded the California Indian their first substantial judgment, netting them approximately \$5,000,000." (Bureau of Indian Affairs, 1966:13) However, in establishing the \$5,000,000 amount, the court followed the mandate of the Lea Act, which provided ". . . a gross recovery, the benefits which were to have been paid to only 1/3 to 1/2 of them under the 18 unratified treaties of 1851-1852. By this proposed settlement this figure is now established at \$17,816,624.48. From this figure must be deducted . . . the subsequent specific benefits granted by the government to all of the Indians . . . this amount is fixed at \$12,650,761.02." (Kenny, 1944:44) Benefits granted to the Indians included items such as thread, thimbles, needles, hoes, etc. However, the vast majority of the \$12,000,000 covered administrative costs of running the Bureau of Indian Affairs in California. Add to this those funds misspent early on, and it is easy to see that Indians actually received very little benefit from the \$12,000,000.

The proposed \$5,000,000 settlement caused an uproar. In response to the controversy, the government established the Indian Land Claims Commission in 1946. Because Indians were no longer willing to allow non-Indians to push the Indian cause, in 1947 the Federal Indians of California was founded. The group submitted an \$88,000,000 claim as a proposed settlement above and beyond the \$5,000,000 already awarded. The 100 delegates present adopted a resolution granting the executive committee the power to hire legal counsel and

press the claim. (Bureau of Indian Affairs, 1966:13)

Much of the activity occurring after World War II was the result of Indians being introduced to a wider perspective. "Now, war as we know it is a horrible thing, but the war did one thing for our Indian people as it did for so many representatives of many ethnic groups. It took them out of their environment, and it scattered them all over the world, as well as the United States, and they saw how the other half lived." (Harrison, 1966:11) Many Indians returned from the war more aware of the way in which governments worked. The war had shown them how the rest of the world lived, and they were no longer satisfied with what was previously theirs. Some returned to their groups with this newly developed knowledge, while others ventured out on their own.

Following World War II, a movement called "termination" began. Termination was to be a process of removing Indians and their land from federal trust. "After the war, as the United States spent millions of dollars rebuilding Germany and Japan, the government hoped to rid itself of its embarrassing failure to 'rebuild' Indian nations by simply withdrawing government aid to Indian people. This philosophy was expressed in the Hoover Commission survey of 1948." (Heizer, 1978:122)

The 1950s saw the beginning of the Hoover Commission's recommendation to initiate termination. "California Indian tribes were to be among the first targets for termination. The commissioner of Indian affairs who inaugurated this policy, Dillon Meyer, was principally known as the man responsible for administering Japanese-American concentration camps during World War II. In 1952, the Bureau of Indian Affairs began to energetically push termination: the Indian Service introduced to Congress several termination bills specifically for California, and in anticipation of that policy, the government ended all Indian Service welfare payments to pauper Indians in the state." (Heizer, 1978:122)

Also in 1950, the first \$5,000,000 settlement was distributed to Indians in California. "Congress finally adopted legislation providing \$150 for each California Indian (leaving a portion of the award still in the U.S. Treasury)." (Forbes, 1969:106) However, by 1951, 23 separate claims had been filed with the Indian Land Claims Commission for additional relief.

The first law that actually initiated termination was in the field of criminal justice. "In 1953 Congress passed Public Law 280, which brought California Indian Reservations under the criminal and civil jurisdiction of the state." (Heizer, 1978:122) Crime occurring on the reservation was no longer the responsibility of the United States government. This new law caused much confusion and resulted in poor protection for Indians on reservations. It was frequently reported that many county sheriffs would arrive three or four days late for emergency situations. In 1957, California Indians called unsuccessfully for repeal of the act.

In late 1952, another issue was brought to the attention of the public. "Twenty-two young Indians, veterans of World War II and Korea, claimed they cannot buy shaving lotion because it contains alcohol. They have formed an Indian Right Organization to fight what they call 'this new menace to the Indian.'" (*Sacramento Bee*, Dec. 29, 1952, p. 1) However, this was not the first time that the problem had been brought to the attention of the government. In 1946, Indians, in a hearing in Eureka, requested that the prohibition against the sale

of alcohol to Indians be lifted. In April 1953, Governor Earl Warren signed into law Senate Bill 344, which for the first time in 81 years made it legal for "full blooded Indians" to purchase alcohol. (*Sacramento Bee*, Apr. 9, 1953, p. 10)

In 1954, the process of termination moved closer to reality through House Resolution 108 the intent of which was "as rapidly as possible to make the Indians within the territorial limits of the United States subject to the same laws and entitled to the same privileges and responsibilities as are applicable to other citizens of the United States. . . . Indian tribes and the individual members thereof, located within the States of California [and other states] . . . should be freed from Federal supervision and control and from all disabilities and limitations specially applicable to Indians (Spicer, 1969:218)

"The California Legislature had endorsed the idea of termination in 1953 but during 1954 made an abrupt change, largely as a result of the hearings conducted by the State Senate Interim Committee on Indian Affairs. The committee found that most reservations were simply unprepared for termination, with a multitude of problems often including undefined boundaries, no roads, no water, no sanitation, substandard housing, and 2,600 complicated heirship cases. The state was unwilling to accept the financial responsibility for correcting the failures of bureau management and opposed the BIA [Bureau of Indian Affairs] termination legislation." (Forbes, 1969:112)

"In 1954, a conference of social scientists, mainly anthropologists, met under the chairmanship of former Assistant Commissioner of Indian Affairs John H. Provinse for the purpose of pooling their knowledge and bringing it to bear on federal Indian policy. A portion of the statement they produced follows. 'An assumption which seems to underlie the basic philosophy of much of the United States approach centers about the idea that assimilation of the American Indian into the normal stream of American life is inevitable, that Indian tribes and communities will disappear. There was complete agreement on the part of the discussants that this prediction is unwarranted. . . . Group feeling and group integrity among the American Indian are as likely to gain strength in the decades ahead as they are to lose it.'" (Spicer, 1969:249-250)

Again in 1957, the process of termination was initiated. "In 1957-58, the State Senate Interim Committee conducted another investigation and found that 'with minor exceptions . . . very little has been done to carry out the recommendations set forth in the [1954-55] report' to prepare Indian reserves for termination. In spite of that fact, the committee in 1957 recommended termination legislation. . . ." (Forbes, 1969:112-113)

In 1958, the Rancheria Termination Act was enacted. "The law provides for the distribution of all rancheria land and assets and directs that a plan be prepared for each rancheria outlining to whom and how the assets shall be distributed. Such a plan, when approved by the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, and accepted by the participant, becomes the operating program under which title is transferred from the Government to the Indians." (Bureau of Indian Affairs, 1966:16) While plans were developed and termination proceeded, many of the plans were not implemented. However, "In response to the pressures of termination, the land claims case, and other issues, on May 3, 1958, Inter Tribal Council of California (ITCC) was founded. The Council was the successor to the California Indian Congress, which was disbanded at the

formation of the new group. The purpose of ITCC is to protect Indian land ownership, preserve established privileges and immunities, and promote understanding and unity and preserve cultural values." (*Los Angeles Times*, May 5, 1958, pp. 4, 9)

In 1959, the problems with termination were temporarily forgotten. "In that year, the Indian Claims Commission issued an order stating that the Indians of California had aboriginal title, as of 1853, to approximately 64 million acres of California land west of the Sierra Nevada." (Bureau of Indian Affairs, 1966:20) A settlement of \$29,100,000 was awarded as redress. This amounted to approximately 47 cents per acre. The Indian Claims Commission approved the settlement in 1964, and Congress appropriated the funds that same year.



Indian Grinding Rock State Historic Park, Amador County

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A History of American Indians in California: 1965-1980

A new era for Indians was about to begin, and just as the social scientists had predicted in 1954, tribal governments and tribal identity did play an important role. "Nationally the civil rights movement ushered in an era of social consciousness among White Americans. In conjunction with the end of the claims and termination issues among native leadership, the climate was again ripe for reform in Indian affairs." (Heizer, 1978:716)

As previously mentioned, the Indian Claims Commission awarded California Indians \$29,100,000 as redress for land from which they had been evicted. While most California Indians eventually would accept the payment, some would not. Members of the Pit River and Feather River groups opposed the settlement. So, when the settlement was awarded, many Indian people were not satisfied with the 47 cents per acre they were to receive.

During the 1960s and 1970s, people who had not previously identified themselves as Indians began to do so. A new awareness was rising, and with this came an increase in the number of Indians listed in the census. However, another program that had an effect on the number of Indians in California was the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) program of relocation. "During the war about 23,000 Indian men and 800 Indian women served in the armed forces, and an estimated 46,000 Indians left the reservation to find employment. Many remained to make California their home. Then, in 1950, the BIA established a job-placement program . . . [and] the program to assimilate Indians into the mainstream expanded from that point. Strangely, the BIA didn't keep records of its relocation program, but nearly 100,000 Indians were relocated to California between 1952-1968 to find employment lacking on reservations. . . . " (*Sacramento Bee*, Sept. 6, 1982, p. 23) Indian people who had lived on reservations were now faced with the new problems of living in an urban environment and the inability to find services. Many were just not ready to live in a city.

In 1964, a monumental case concerning Indian religion occurred in California. On April 28, 1962, a group of Navajos met in Needles to perform a religious ceremony in which peyote was used. Peyote is a drug derived from the buttons of the mescal cactus. The Indians were arrested and tried for violating the law which prohibited unauthorized possession of the drug. Judge Mathew O. Tobriner of the California Supreme Court issued the court's decision, In responding to a lower court's verdict, Tobriner wrote, "The court ruled to deny Indian use of peyote was a violation of their religious freedom. 'We preserve a greater value than an ancient tradition when we protect the rights of the Indian who honestly practices an old religion. . . .'" (35 CAL Reporter, 1964:708) At

this point, public consciousness began to recognize Indian religion and the value it had to the Indian people.

The year 1964 also saw the formation of the American Indian Historical Society by Rupert Costo, a Southern California Indian. "The AIHS was especially concerned with bringing an Indian viewpoint to bear upon historical writing but it also became concerned with many related issues including the white biases of school textbooks and the non-Indian orientation of school curricula." (Forbes, 1969:120) Since its formation, the society has published *The Indian Historian*, and from 1973 until recently, it published the *Wassaja*, an Indian newspaper.

The 1960s and 1970s brought the concept of Indian self determination to reality. Indian Self Determination is a program in which Indians determine their future through the development of policies that meet their needs as they have defined them. It is too early to say if the program is a success. However, an early example of Indians having control over their lives was evidenced in the California Indian Health Demonstration Project. "This project originated in the State Department of Public Health, Bureau of Maternal and Child Health in 1967. Nine projects were set up among reservation communities throughout the state. Funded by state and federal health departments, these pilot projects stressed Indian participation and control and have acted as a catalyst for community cooperation in bringing medical and dental services to rural and reservation Indians. . . . By 1973, sixteen projects had been set up. . . ." (Heizer, 1978:124) With the formation of the California Rural Indian Health Board in 1969, an Indian-controlled coordinating body took charge.

In 1967, the California Indian Education Association was founded. In October of that year, a conference in North Fork, California ". . . brought together about 200 Indians who thoroughly analyzed the problems involved in Indian education. . . . Basically, the North Fork Conference called for increased Indian involvement at all levels of the education process. It especially emphasized the role of the Indian family and community in the education of children and advocated the development of Indian-directed out-of-school educational projects. Stress was placed upon the value of the native heritage. The North Fork Conference also called for the restoration of Johnson O'Malley funds. . . ." (Forbes, 1969:121) With the formation of the California Rural Indian Health Board, the American Indian Historical Society, and the California Indian Education Association, California Indians were involved in the process of controlling their past, present, and future.

The acknowledgment of Indians continued in 1968 when Governor Ronald Reagan signed a resolution calling for the fourth Friday of each September to be American Indian Day in California. This acknowledgment has done much to inform the general public about Indian heritage and the problems that are confronted by Indians in California.

"Another important development since the 1960s was the creation of Native American studies departments at major universities in California. In the fall of 1969, Indian students at the University of California at Berkeley, Los Angeles, and Davis and at Sacramento State University demanded that these institutions begin programs and offer courses in Indian culture and history." (Heizer, 1967:125) Today, much valuable information has come from these programs. They have also assisted Indian students by providing them with needed

services, and have promoted a better Indian self-image.

"Indian land issues became international news in November 1969 when a group called Indians of All Tribes occupied Alcatraz Island in San Francisco Bay and held the site for nearly two years." (Heizer, 1967:716) "Within two months, the Pit River Tribe learned the lesson of Alcatraz." (Balin, 1971) On June 5, 1970, the Pit River Tribe issued a proclamation that stated: "We are the rightful and legal owner of the land. . . . No amount of money can buy the Mother Earth; therefore, the California Indian Land Claims Commission has no meaning. The Earth is our Mother and we cannot sell her." (*Ibid.*) Since then, the Pit Rivers have successfully reoccupied a number of pieces of land.

By 1970, the census showed that there were 91,018 Indians in California. This number did not differentiate between California Indians and Indians who came here from other states. In 1972, 120 years after the Indians signed the 18 lost treaties, 60,000 California Indians received \$633 each as compensation for land covered by the treaties. Some Indians refused the payment, and some failed to cash the check, but others who had waited for generations and had spent much time and money trying to resolve the issue accepted the payment. The land claims case was finally over.

Ten of the original terminated rancherias left Indian ownership by 1974. The same year, California reservation Indians filed and won a class action suit known as the Rincon decision. The suit charged that the Indian Health Service had not provided California Indians with health care comparable to that provided in other states. The U.S. District Court in San Francisco agreed. The State of California began to supplement federal Indian Health money in 1975, the first state to do so. (Heizer, 1978:126; *Sacramento Bee*, Sept. 6-7, 1981) In 1982, California Indians received most of the \$8,700,000 supplemental funds from the Rincon ruling award.

In 1976, the California Native American Heritage Commission was established. Since that time, the commission has assisted Indians in preserving cultural and religious sites important to them. By 1980, the number of Indians in California had grown to more than 201,000, more Indians than in any other state. Probably a little more than half of these are the descendents of aboriginal Californians. Their population is still far below the approximately 310,000 Indians living in California when Europeans first arrived on these shores.



Ya-Ka-Ama Indian School, Sonoma County

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History



A History of Black Americans in California: INTRODUCTION

This report, an historical overview of the Afro-American experience in California, was drawn from both oral and documentary accounts to identify and interpret significant Afro-American cultural resources. The study broadly covers the period from the Spanish and Mexican era through World War II, with the years between 1850 and 1940 examined in greatest detail.

To date, little factual information has been collected concerning Black presence in the decades immediately following statehood. There are few references to the experience of Black people either in nineteenth century local histories or in later and more scholarly interpretive histories. It is only recently that rural, poor, and ethnic minorities have been given serious consideration by American historians. Yet, despite scholarly neglect, the experience of Black Californians has been recorded in the memories of living people. And it is from these memories — both recollections and eyewitness accounts — that much of the historical data compiled in this report has been obtained.

Lay persons and scholars alike seem to believe that before 1940 there were virtually no Black people in the state. Contrary to these notions, although Afro-American people were comparatively few in number before World War II, they were settled throughout the state and made significant contributions to its development and growth. Population centers during the nineteenth century were located in the state's northern region. More than 60 percent of the Black persons in California counted in the United States Census of 1850 lived in Mother Lode mining towns. Within the decade of the 1850s, the population doubled and shifted away from the mines, so a mere 30 percent of the 3,721 Black persons enumerated in the 1860 census lived in the Mother Lode.

By 1900, 7,858 Black people lived in California, widely distributed among both northern and southern counties. Numerically small until the late 1940s, the group maintained a steady growth rate, although it never exceeded one percent of the total population. However, once the population center shifted to Southern California in the two decades before World War II, the growth rate in Los Angeles County alone doubled the rate for the entire state.

In this study, Black life has been examined from several perspectives: work experience, social organization, political status, and economic development. But these processes, like the social and political constraints on them, have been given only cursory consideration. Enough, however, has been done to unequivocally demonstrate the breadth in time and geographical space of the Afro-American experience and the availability of both archival and oral history resources for further study. Further research should be done in a timely

manner, since the most valuable resource for this type study, the living memories, are not timeless. Without the benefit of elderly Blacks' recollections and eyewitness accounts, many dimensions of the Afro-American contribution to California will never be known.



Clinton Chapel A.M.E., Episcopal Church, Stanislaus County

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A History of Black Americans in California: A.M.E. CHURCH

The presence of Black people in California dates back to the Spanish colonial expansion. When the Spanish expeditions to the Pacific Coast were being organized, Africans, present in Mexico by the sixteenth century, were recruited. Serving in various capacities, free men of African ancestry helped establish California missions and pueblos. They constituted 25 percent of Juan Bautista de Anza's 1775 expedition to San Francisco, and more than 50 percent of the colony established at Los Angeles in 1781.

In fact, the first non-Indian buried in Monterey was a Black man. Entry number one in the first *Book of Deaths* at the Mission San Carlos Borromeo, the second mission established in California and the first in Northern California, was a Black man, Alex Nino.

Under Mexican rule, some Black persons who were naturalized Mexican citizens attained eminence in California. At the beginning of the American period, Richard Freeman, an Afro-American born in the eastern United States, joined the small American colony at San Diego. On February 10, 1847, Freeman bought the Ponciano property, a lot and a four room, one-story adobe building. There, he resided with Allen Light, the colony's other Afro-American, until his death in 1851. These men operated a profitable grog shop known as the San Diego House in the adobe during their four years' residence.

Not much is known about the association of these two men before the period of their San Diego residency, although there are a few records on Light's life. Light, a native of Philadelphia, was in New York by 1827, the year an affidavit was prepared certifying the 24-year-old man's free status. History records him as present in California sometime around 1835. Light deserted the ship *Pilgrim* that year to remain in the Mexican territory. Along the Pacific Coast, he quickly gained prominence as a sea otter hunter. Some of his activities have been recorded in Richard Henry Dana's book, *Two Years Before the Mast*. By 1839, Light was a Mexican citizen, commissioned by the Alcalde of Santa Barbara to enforce Mexican maritime law as it pertained to sea otter hunting. Light moved to Humboldt County sometime after Freeman's death and died there in 1881. Mary Light, whom he apparently married after leaving San Diego, died six years before her husband.

Black people also settled in the village of Yerba Buena on San Francisco Bay. William Alexander Leidesdorff, born in 1810 in the Virgin Islands to a Danish man and an African woman, was reputedly the wealthiest and certainly one of the village's most influential men. He achieved great prominence during his seven-year residence in San Francisco, through commercial and political

endeavors. In addition to San Francisco properties, Leidesdorff received Rancho Rio de los Americanos (later known as Folsom) in eastern Sacramento County as a Mexican land grant.

Following Leidesdorff's untimely death, the city fathers, as a tribute to their distinguished early citizen, staged an impressive funeral. However, a memorial befitting this famous pioneer was never erected in the city to which he made such a profound contribution.

Delegates to California's 1849 constitutional convention drafted a charter that created a non-slave state, yet they severely proscribed the civil rights of free persons of color. After admission to the Union, the California Legislature, in its first sessions, enacted further proscriptions in order to disenfranchise Black citizens. Black people had no right to: 1) testify in court against a White person; [1] 2) receive a public education; [2] 3) homestead public lands; [3] or 4) vote. [4]

California's Black leadership held conventions in several northern counties during the nineteenth century to develop political strategies and social programs designed to bring about a new political order. Four State Conventions of the Colored Citizens of California were convened between 1855-1865 in order to secure full citizenship. Sacramento's Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church, the first Black church west of the Mississippi, hosted three of the four conventions. The fourth was held in San Francisco.

Born of political circumstances, the African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church was the oldest Black church in the United States. In 1787, Richard Allen led the withdrawal of Black Methodists from the predominantly White Philadelphia congregation with whom the group had worshipped, and created a racially separate church. W.E.B. DuBois described that church as "the greatest Negro organization in the world," [5] an accolade earned through active involvement in secular affairs. Black theology, as the A.M.E. Church interpreted it, was inseparable from practical matters of liberation. Committed to combatting institutionalized prejudice and bringing about a new political order, the church made available financial support, meeting rooms, and an educated leadership wherever it emerged.

Whenever possible, new branches of African Methodism were organized. Thus, the church seized on the opportunity to establish African Methodism in California immediately following statehood.

Sacramento's A.M.E. Church formally established the A.M.E. Church of California, and for more than three decades it was the principal Black denomination in the state. A.M.E. churches emerged in various towns, built on the efforts of the church's educated leadership and the strength of its political program. By the time the Third Annual Convention of Ministers and lay delegates to the California Conference met in September 1863, substantial and comfortable houses of worship stood in Coloma, Marysville, Sacramento, Stockton, San Francisco, Grass Valley, and Nevada City. All that remains in most gold mining towns to designate the first sites of Black political activity are the words, "African Church," written across lots on nineteenth-century property maps.

The decision was made in 1854 for the first State Convention "to take into

consideration the propriety of petitioning the Legislature of California for a change in the law relating to the testimony of colored people in the Courts of Justice of this State." [1] Forty-nine delegates from 10 counties were present at the First Colored Convention of California, held in Sacramento's Bethel African Methodist Church November 20-22, 1855. The general assembly created an association with county auxiliaries and a \$10,000 discretionary fund to wage a formal statewide campaign against statutory disenfranchisement.

The right to testimony was virtually tantamount to free status. Without it, individuals could not protect personal status or property from either the allegations or assault of others. The Civil Practice Act, Section 394, which passed into law in 1852, made the testimony of a Black person in admissible in the courts when offered in cases involving a White person.



Allen Chapel A.M.E., Riverside County

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A History of Black Americans in California: EDUCATION

While the convention's primary objective was repeal of the law that deprived Black people of the right to testimony, education was also recognized as a key issue. Many delegates considered education to be the vehicle for change. Convention delegates spoke of education as "a quality, a means to dignify men, to enable them to command respect of their fellows and increase their intelligence and wealth." [7]

An education committee was created at the Second Convention, held at the same location in Sacramento, December 9-12, 1856. The education committee did much to secure educational opportunities for Black youth. A statewide committee of Black men selected by the Second Convention's general assembly spearheaded the campaign to repeal the 1852 law that barred Black children from the common schools. [8] Concurrently, it assisted parent groups trying to secure admission to their local common schools, and as an interim measure, it established private schools to provide immediate instruction.

The Black church, and particularly the African Methodist Episcopal Church of California (A.M.E.), through its missions and stations, opened the first schools. By 1854, both the Sacramento and San Francisco A.M.E. churches had set up classrooms in their basements. Actions taken by Black parents in local school districts precipitated a series of amendments to legislation concerning segregated schools. Incremental changes between 1852 and 1879 gave Black children legal access to a separate, although unequal, education. Statutory proscription of Black children's right to a public education was not repealed until 1880.

For a limited period in the 1850s, some school districts admitted Black children to common schools. When the Grass Valley Common School opened in 1854, three Black children were admitted. Parents, on learning that the presumably White children each had a Black parent, petitioned the trustees for their removal. The trustees refused, and the petition was forwarded to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction who invoked the 1852 statute and ordered the trustees to exclude the children or lose their state funding. The trustees refused. The superintendent, who at that time did not have the power to revoke funding, could not censor the trustees. The legislature soon amended the school segregation bill to give the State Superintendent censorship power. After 1860, the superintendent could indeed censor a district by removing its state funds.

Formal educational institutions housed in buildings outfitted as schools began to appear in the 1860s through efforts organized by Black communities and supported by their subscriptions. Private schools opened in towns like Nevada

City, Marysville, Oakland, San Jose, and Red Bluff. In 1864, the State Superintendent of Public Schools, John Swett, in his *Thirteenth Annual Report*, stated that there were 831 Black school-age children in California, and six state-supported "colored schools." Located in San Francisco, Sacramento, Marysville, San Jose, Stockton, and Petaluma, these schools could serve only a fraction of the Black youth. Furthermore, the colored schools did not meet the Black communities' requirement that their children enjoy equal access to publicly supported education. In 1872, Mrs. Harriet A. Ward, on behalf of her daughter Mary Frances who was denied admission by Principal Noah Flood of the Broadway School in San Francisco, initiated California's first school segregation court case. Eighteen months later, the State Supreme Court established the principle of "separate but equal" in California school law, in the *Ward v. Flood* case.

Even after the school segregation legislation was repealed, vestiges of discriminatory practices against Black students had to be removed through judicial intervention. Visalia, a district in Tulare County that resisted educating its Black youth until 1873, did not desegregate until 1890, and then only under a court order. Edmund Wysinger, a Black resident of Visalia, filed a writ of mandate on behalf of his minor son, Arthur, on October 2, 1888, challenging a public institution's authority to deny a group its constitutional right because of race, color, or national origin. On March 1, 1890, the California Supreme Court, in *Wysinger v. Crookshank* [9] reversed a lower court decision and ordered 12-year-old Arthur Wysinger admitted to Visalia's regular school system.

School segregation emerged again in the twentieth century. The pattern, however, differed from that of the previous century. By 1910, schools staffed with White personnel were the general practice. Black teachers were barred as public school teachers, just as they were from most other non-menial occupations. School districts excluded trained Black professionals until the 1950s by requiring teachers to have at least one year's experience in California under a regular appointment, an eligibility criterion that could not be met in a closed system.

Ironically, El Centro's Elementary District, among the state's most rigidly segregated systems, inadvertently made it possible in 1913 for a few teachers to circumvent the barriers to professional opportunity. El Centro followed the Southern segregation model, in which the staff and students were a racially homogeneous group. Consequently, only Black teachers could be assigned to teach Black students, and the assignments were regular teaching appointments. Given the obvious benefits of regular teaching appointments, the city's elementary and high school districts attracted the state's most talented teachers. Despite the inadequacies of facilities at the two Black schools, their curriculum and instructional staff were superior. [10]

Teachers who held regular appointments in El Centro achieved at least the formal requirements for employment in other districts in the state that had predominantly Black schools.

Holmes Avenue in Los Angeles was the first school in that city where Black teachers who had the requisite teaching experience could secure an appointment. Erected in 1910 adjacent to the Furlong Tract, a Black settlement established on a subdivided tract, it was the first school in Los Angeles

specifically built for a Black neighborhood. For many years, the staff at Holmes Avenue was totally White. When the district finally did hire Black staff members, most had received their training in El Centro.



Allensworth women, Tulare County [circa 1920]

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History



A History of Black Americans in California: INDUSTRY

The California Legislature not only disenfranchised its Black citizens, but also enacted a fugitive slave law that jeopardized the status of free persons of color. Evidence derived from various court cases, manumission records, pioneers' personal documents, and legislative proceedings show that conditions of servitude existed for many Black Californians between 1848 and 1863. The conditions prevailed despite a constitutional provision which stipulated that "neither slavery or involuntary servitude, unless for the punishment of a crime shall ever be tolerated in the State." Even though the constitution prohibited the peculiar institution, it should be noted that an 1852 law provided for seizure of any person alleged to be a fugitive brought to the state before its admission to the Union. [11] On proof to the satisfaction of a magistrate of the court, the accused could be removed from the state. Under no circumstances could testimony of the alleged fugitive be admitted as evidence.

Official records indicate that this law was used to veil the intent of persons unlawfully holding others in involuntary servitude. The experience of Bidley Mason and Stephen Spencer Hill are two cases in point.

Despite their political disenfranchisement, Black people contributed to the development of three California industries before World War II: mining, lumber, and agriculture. Black miners could be found throughout the mining frontier — in the Mother Lode Country and in Southern California's gold mines. Historic place names in the gold region such as Negro Bar, Negro Flat, and Nigger Ravine are reminders of Black miners' presence and the racist behavior their presence evoked. Pejorative epithets such as these, commonly used in gold region place names, portray the hostile environment within which Black miners worked to secure their claims, protect their liberty, and guard against bodily harm. Without the right to testify against Whites, these miners had only their genius, brawn, and comrades to protect them from White miners' encroachments.

Individual Blacks, free and slave, worked alongside Whites, while others worked in company with fellow Black miners. Kentucky Ridge Mine, near Bidney Springs in Nevada County, operated for two years (1851 and 1852) by a large number of slaves, has acquired virtual legendary status. A colony of Black men and women settled along Deer Creek in 1851 to work the Kentucky Ridge Mine. These Afro-Americans came to Nevada County from Georgia as the slaves of Colonel William F. English. English reportedly was a Georgia planter who sold his plantation in 1850, then journeyed to Philadelphia, where he purchased a ship to transport machinery and workers to California to establish a mining enterprise.

Organized mining companies formed by Afro-Americans operated some profitable mining claims. A Black concern owned Horncut Mine, a prosperous quartz claim in Brown's Valley, the town near Marysville in Yuba County that became prominent for its rich surface diggings and extensive quartz mines. Another Black mining concern, the Rare Ripe Gold and Silver Mining Company, also located in Brown's Valley was, according to an article in the *San Francisco Elevator*, 1868, a "first class" company (a noteworthy comment, since quartz mining required heavy machinery, and few men had the investment capital to properly outfit that kind of mining operation).

Outside Stockton, San Joaquin County, Mose Rodgers, in company with other Black men, owned several successful mining companies. Rodgers best-known mine, and one for which he was a stockholding superintendent, was the Washington Mine, established in 1869. In certain years, more than half a million dollars in gold was taken out of the Washington Mine. A mining tycoon and technical genius, Rodgers was constantly sought after for his knowledge of mining technology.

Gold was discovered in San Diego County in 1869 by a Black man, Frederick Coleman. Coleman made the discovery near Julian, in a creek that now bears his name. Thousands swarmed to the area as news of the discovery spread, radically changing the quiet settlement that had originally been established by Blacks and Indians. A town government was installed, and the place was renamed to commemorate the Julian brothers, Mike and Webb, former Confederate soldiers.

The ethnic character of the new town changed after the discovery of gold, but its Black population continued to increase. In fact, Julian continued to have the highest percentage of Black residents of any town in the county until 1900, and Black people continued to be represented in the commercial sector as the new town began to grow. Prominent among the entrepreneurs were Albert and Margaret Robinson, who operated a restaurant in the 1870s and later expanded it to include a hotel. The Robinson Hotel, operated under family management until 1921, is now the town's only hotel.

Black mill workers from the old South were a principal labor force in the wood products industry in at least three counties between 1920 and 1960. Experienced Black mill workers recruited directly from the South are known to have migrated to lumber towns in Plumas and Siskiyou counties in the 1920s, and in Placer County in the 1940s. Weed and Foresthill are two lumber towns that serve as examples of Afro-Americans' critical participation in the industry. McCloud and a number of other towns share a similar history. Further examination of this facet of the lumber industry could contribute a great deal toward an understanding of a significant pattern of labor history.

Black settlements were established in Quincy and Weed during the 1920s by Louisiana-based sawmill companies that purchased existing California mills and recruited experienced workers from communities adjacent to the parent company's home operation. Transportation costs were advanced, and housing was guaranteed for those willing to relocate.

In the 1920s, when Southern Black mill workers entered the California lumber industry's labor force, racial discrimination was flagrant throughout the

industry. The employment structure limited Black men to non-supervisory positions. Although they were indispensable to the mills' operation, their compensation and status were never commensurate to their work. Their responsibilities ranged from highly skilled operations to the most dangerous, and some mills were manned by virtually all Black crews that performed all but supervisory functions. It was not until quite recently that Black men have been elevated to the position of foreman.



Grace Apartments, Los Angeles County

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History



A History of Black Americans in California: FARMING

Americans who established farms in the San Joaquin and Imperial Valleys toward the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century recruited Southern Blacks, a plentiful source of cheap labor, to introduce their experimental crops. Consequently, Afro-Americans were among the earliest contract laborers recruited from outside the state to develop California agriculture.

Fresno County is one early example of the recruitment of Afro- American farm laborers. At the end of the nineteenth century, the agricultural industry in Fresno County began to shift from cultivation of cereals to deciduous fruits and grapes. This more labor-intensive production heightened the demand for field laborers. Formal labor recruitment was directed at Southern Black communities. Oral testimony taken from descendants of these pioneer toilers states that "a train load" of Black people from North Carolina reached Fresno County in 1888 under work contracts that obligated them for several years. Shortly thereafter, another immigrant group arrived by train from Canada. While the actual number of immigrants in these groups is not known, Fresno County's Black population did increase notably from 40 in 1880 to 485 by 1890, but did not increase substantially thereafter.

Until around 1905, the Imperial Valley was a vast, dreary desert region, part of the Colorado Desert. After 1905, growers began to transform it into an agricultural center with a great need for labor. Its name was changed to Imperial Valley, and a 70-mile canal was put through Mexican territory to water its fertile but arid terrain, making it attractive to settlers.

Cotton, experimentally introduced in Imperial County in about 1913, was a labor-intensive crop that required a large labor force. Growers recruited agricultural workers directly from the South and Mexico to work the fields. By the middle of the second decade, Black people had begun to relocate to the Imperial Valley. Many settled in El Centro where a number of notable Black institutions developed. On arrival in El Centro, Black people met racism not unlike that which characterized the communities from which they had emigrated. Their organized resistance to the Jim Crow system probably contributed to the group becoming less desirable as field workers than Mexican nationals.

Although Black people were among the first contract farm laborers, they never became a major work group in the agricultural industry. Direct Southern recruitment, obviously inimical to Southern planters' interests, encountered local resistance, especially after thousands of workers walked off the

plantations during the 1870s to homestead land in the Kansas Territory. [13] Furthermore, growers soon found that persons recruited during the 1880s and 1890s would not accept the status of field laborers when other occupational opportunities existed.

The nineteenth-century growers' recruitment efforts, aided by the African Episcopal Zion Church, attracted educated and skilled laborers from Southern cities. African Methodist Zion ministers began the colonization program in the 1880s to expand African Methodist Zionism in California. Hundreds of emigrants assembled in North Carolina cities for transportation to California. However, many emigrants considered contract labor to be a means to relocate and become established, and sought to become entrepreneurs, skilled workers, and yeoman farmers when their contracts terminated.

California growers, who had long resisted the Afro-Americans' efforts to achieve a competitive edge, found Black workers unsuitable, and turned their attention to a foreign labor source. Other non-White foreign workers could be recruited in a less competitive labor market, and growers resolved to use them.

Land-based economic development in agricultural settlements was promoted at various times after the turn of the century in Yolo, San Bernardino, Tulare, and Fresno counties. The Yolo County settlement in 1900 was perhaps the first group attempt to build an agricultural base on homesteaded land. Settlement by Blacks could not have occurred earlier, since California's homestead laws had previously required a homesteader to be a White citizen.

In California, like other regions, Black homesteaders had to settle for the least desirable land. The land Black families successfully homesteaded overlooking the town of Guinda in Yolo County had earlier been given over to bandits. High above the valley, at a considerable distance from the county seat and transportation points, the area was remote and relatively inaccessible.

For years, maps showed the settlement as Nigger Hill, the pejorative place name used by locals. The nomenclature reflected local racial conditions. Despite social and environmental adversities, Black ranchers moved in from Northern California and the Bay Area, and raised cattle and experimented with orchards and other agricultural products. On what was once the main road leading to the summit stands a sandstone boulder, "Owl Rock," on which residents over the years have etched their names. Owl Rock represents the last physical evidence of the early settlement.

At least two different efforts at colonization occurred in San Bernardino County between 1900 and 1910. The Forum, a Los Angeles civic club organized in 1903, solicited families to homestead government land in the Sidewinder Valley, desert land near Victorville. The first homesteader took up 640 acres at a site where ground water could be easily lifted, but water, although critical to subsequent development, was never available in ample supply. Little is known about the actual number of families who relocated to Sidewinder Valley during the Forum's promotional effort. However, in a newspaper account in 1914, the Forum reported that more than 20,000 acres had been homesteaded by Blacks. Lucerne, an adjacent town situated in the arid Sidewinder Valley, has been singled out by pioneers in Sidewinder Valley as an originally Black settlement.

Another highly publicized colonization effort in San Bernardino County occurred in 1904. [14] The African Society, a group based in the town of San Bernardino and capitalized at \$10,000, according to the *San Francisco Chronicle*, had been created to colonize the Southern California area.

The Tulare County agricultural settlement was the town of Allensworth. Established in 1908 by a group of promoters, Allensworth was more than an agricultural settlement. It was designed to be a self-governed Black town. The promoters attracted more than 200 settlers to the town in the first few years. For nearly a decade, Allensworth's pioneers struggled to create a viable town in the arid San Joaquin Valley. Artesian water, initially abundant, soon stopped flowing at the volume required to meet domestic and agricultural demand. Although various plans were implemented to acquire adequate water, this town, like other agricultural settlements, became another dream deferred.



Second Baptist Church, San Joaquin County

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History



A History of Black Americans in California: BUSINESS

Black people engaged in the full range of contemporary businesses for at least three decades after statehood. Interest in business pursuits attracted many early Black immigrants to settle in towns where they could provide goods and services for the swarms of people who came during the Gold Rush years. San Francisco, in the nineteenth century, was the city where most Black business activities were centered.

Black entrepreneurs, like their contemporaries, entered businesses they believed the White majority would patronize. As long as the population was growing, and need for goods and services exceeded supply, Black entrepreneurs could enter most business areas with relatively little difficulty. Toward the close of the century, however, Black entrepreneurs found their business pursuits restricted to a narrow range of services as Whites, emigrating from mining districts and other jurisdictions and seeking a competitive edge, began a campaign to intensify the prevailing racial prejudice. Before long, the few areas where a Black entrepreneur could reasonably expect sufficient White patronage to develop a prosperous concern were limited to service-related enterprises such as tonsorial, boot black, livery, restaurant/ catering, and drayage businesses.

Institutionalized racism began to emerge in the latter decade of the nineteenth century, and by 1920, even displaced Black barbers from the prosperous luxury shops operated for White businessmen in choice downtown locations. For more than 50 years prior to that, Black men enjoyed a near monopoly on this trade.

Residences owned by these nineteenth-century settlers stood on lots along city blocks in the downtown districts where they worked. Frequently, though, they clustered three or four families in a city block, often in certain wards or districts. This scattered residential pattern began to change as institutional racism began to encroach further upon California Black life.

Restrictive city ordinances, real estate covenants, and other racially discriminatory measures that came into practice at the turn of the century and continued in effect for more than six decades, dramatically limited access by Black people to local resources such as housing, employment, education, and public accommodations. Housing restrictions gradually limited the size of Black residential areas and thereby created overcrowded neighborhoods and depressed economic growth. Real estate interests refused to make mortgage money available for property in certain "red-lined" areas and thus turned many Black neighborhoods, especially those with older housing, into slums. Urban

renewal programs during the 1960s targeted ethnic neighborhoods in downtown districts, wiping out most nineteenth-century neighborhoods in or near downtown business districts. Around the periphery of various cities' business districts, an occasional structure representing these early neighborhoods survives.

Nineteenth-century commercial structures were more likely to survive the 1960s urban renewal blitz than were residential properties.

This was particularly true in the Gold Rush districts where Black settlement antedated the period of racially restrictive land use patterns. As a rule, nineteenth-century Black-owned businesses were scattered through out downtown business districts. One Northern California town where several nineteenth- and early twentieth-century commercial properties have been identified in the original business district is Red Bluff in Tehama County. San Diego, in the southern region, also has nineteenth-century business properties in the original downtown business district, known historically as the Horton Addition.

Black business districts were developed after the turn of the century to provide services for Black communities in cities like Oakland and Los Angeles where populations were substantial and growing. These businesses soon found their economic opportunities constricted by the same city ordinances and covenants that precipitated residential neighborhood deterioration. Business development trends in Los Angeles during the first decades of the twentieth century were not only a microcosm of the racial discrimination practices that emerged in California after the turn of the century, but also reflected the evolution of Black businesses created to serve neighborhood clientele.

Black businesses established after the turn of the century were initially located in downtown Los Angeles near the original Black settlement. As industry began to encroach on the old settlement, businesses and residents were forced to move further south. Central Avenue then became the major Black business section. In 1929, when Dr. J. A. Summerville built the town's first major Black hotel, Hotel Summerville (now known as the Dunbar), the central business district coalesced around the hotel. The A. J. Roberts Funeral Home was among the first businesses established during this era. Andrew J. Roberts, who for years had operated a successful drayage concern, Los Angeles Van, Truck and Storage Company, sold the business sometime after 1905 to establish a mortuary. When the establishment opened, it was the town's first Black mortuary. The Roberts Funeral Home conducted an apprenticeship program to train persons for the profession, and also provided technical services to other mortuaries. At one period, the staff performed most embalming services for Los Angeles's Japanese morticians.

Insurance companies, with few exceptions, denied Black people insurance coverage. Those companies that did write policies for Blacks did so at discriminatory premium rates. Golden State Guarantee Fund Insurance Company of Los Angeles, a company expressly created to provide life insurance coverage for Black people, received its charter July 23, 1925. Entering a non-competitive market, the company soon established branch offices in various California cities and even in other states.

Responding to the Black community's need for quality medical care, three

Black doctors established the Dunbar Hospital in 1923. Shortly thereafter, two other medical facilities were opened. Two pharmacists affiliated with the Dunbar Hospital opened the first pharmacy in the state owned and operated by Black women. White institutions at that time denied Black patients full medical service and equal accommodations, and barred Black doctors from affiliation.

Private medical offices began to appear in the 1920s. The earliest was opened jointly by a medical doctor and a dentist in the Hudson-Ledell Building, designed by Paul Williams. The use pattern of this building reflects the economic changes that occurred over a 40-year period in the Central Avenue business district. Professional offices were located in the building until World War II. During World War II, Central Avenue became a major entertainment hub, and a nightclub known as the Club Memo occupied the building. When the Club Memo closed, the Hudson-Ledell Building was again converted to professional offices. Since 1963, the building has been the field office for Los Angeles City Councilman Gilbert Lindsay. The area is now undergoing revitalization.

A major break in the pervasive occupational racism that restricted workers, both educated and uneducated, to low-paying menial jobs came through the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters. The brotherhood was created August 25, 1925, as a union for Pullman porters and maids. It was the first Afro-American labor organization to receive a charter in the American Federation of Labor. The union was an advocate for Black men and women employed by the Pullman Company.



Frazier/Toombs House, San Francisco County

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History



A History of Black Americans in California: ASSOCIATIONS

Voluntary associations have traditionally welcomed and provided assistance to individuals and groups newly arrived in a strange city. However, Black migrants coming to California's cities after 1920 found conventional social service organizations like the Red Cross, Salvation Army, YMCA, and YWCA closed to them. Housing and employment assistance, as well as care for the orphaned and infirm, which these facilities provided (usually at no cost), had to be financed directly by the Black community. Black club women were prime movers in filling the void.

The California Association of Colored Women's Clubs was formed in 1905 as an affiliate of the National Association of Colored Women's Clubs. At its inception, the association recognized the need for social services and encouraged local efforts to meet that need. Homes for Black working girls and women was one program that received statewide support. Clubs throughout California purchased residential structures and established homes with wholesome surroundings for women and girls who worked in cities where there were no suitable public accommodations. Houses to serve this purpose still exist in Sacramento, San Francisco, and Los Angeles.

Homes for orphaned children and child care services for working mothers were other social services provided in the community. A number of facilities offering these services were created by various providers. The East Bay club women became affiliated with the Northern Section of California Association of Colored Women's Clubs through a consolidated effort on April 30, 1918, and established the Fannie Wall Children's Home and Day Nursery. At the Oakland home, a staff of professional women administered resident care for orphans and day care for children of working mothers. Care for adolescent orphans was provided through private training schools where orphans could earn their fees through regular on-the-job training. The Duval School, organized in Beulah Heights (Oakland) in 1914, is but one private institution that accepted adolescent orphan girls and trained them for domestic work.

Aged Black people were also provided responsible care in a congenial environment. The Home for the Aged and Infirm Colored People, built in 1897 in Oakland, was the first such institution in the state. Black club women originated the idea and formed the Old Peoples Home Association in 1892 to develop a facility. Within five years, the association had approximately 100 members and a three-story home, which in 1897 cost \$4,000. Several founders served on the Board of Directors until the home was closed in 1938. The Black Southern California Baptist Church opened a similar facility in Los Angeles in 1919. The Southern California homes were the Abilia Home for the Aged and

the Linden Home for the Aged. Another facility for aged Black people, the Dunigan, was a private rest home founded in Ontario in San Bernardino County. A number of additional private rest homes were created as the need arose.

Black men and women in the military during the First World War could not get assistance in finding housing, employment, or other needed services from general social service agencies like the Red Cross, YMCA, and YWCA. Even the military, then a segregated service, offered little assistance to its Black members and their families. The Booker T. Washington Community Services Center, Inc. was established in 1919 by Black club women in San Francisco who were concerned about the lack of social services made available to Black military personnel and their families. These women raised funds to establish and operate the Booker T. Washington Center. After World War I, when the need that created the center had passed, its board of directors changed the function. Since then, it has offered a broad range of services for both youth and adults in the Western Addition area of San Francisco.



Negro Womens' Civic Improvement Club, Sacramento County

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A History of Black Americans in California: NOTED INDIVIDUALS

These social processes produced individuals whose attainments would have made them national figures except for their color. Foremost among this group was James P. Beckwourth, a shrewd and enterprising explorer, fur trader, and speculator. Beckwourth contributed much that has not been appropriately recognized to the history of the West. Yet this Black man's White contemporaries, like Kit Carson and Jim Bridger, have been so widely acclaimed that they are now legendary figures.

Other notable individuals include Edward P. Duplex, who was elected mayor of Wheatland in Yuba County in 1888; John Scott, a member of John Fremont's second western expedition; J. Goodman Bray, manager of tourmaline mines in Mesa Grande and founder of the tourmaline mining industry of San Diego County; Bidley Mason, a slave emancipated in Los Angeles by a United States District Court of Appeals judge, who became a wealthy philanthropist; and Mary Ellen (Mammy) Pleasant, perhaps now the most widely recognized among the early notables.

A prosperous and influential San Francisco businesswoman, Pleasant supported, and at times helped finance, the fight to end slavery and to gain citizenship in the free states. This struggle, in its various phases, engaged Black Americans throughout the nineteenth century. Pleasant was associated with both the citizenship movement in California and abolition activities in the eastern United States.

Structures designed by architects and builders also express the Afro-American presence in California. During the nineteenth century, it was commonplace for a master carpenter or brickmason to both design and construct buildings, a practice which continued into the twentieth century. These early builder-architects created much of the environment that now represents the state's architectural history. Included in this group were Black men. However, Black builder-architects, like their White contemporaries, have remained virtually anonymous, save for recollections and eyewitness accounts recorded in people's memories.

Amos Brown (1900-1965) and Paul R. Williams (1897-1980) were important professional Black architects. Brown, of the San Francisco Bay Area, designed residential structures, while Williams, a prominent Los Angeles architect, received considerable acclaim for both commercial and residential structures. In the 1920s, as a young architect, Williams received a number of commissions from the Black business community to build commercial structures. Several of these buildings have been listed as historic resources, albeit for their historical

rather than their architectural merit. Architecturally distinctive designs created by this architect have been recognized through peer review. The Music Corporation of America building in Beverly Hills won the American Institute of Architects Gold Medal Award in 1960 for the most outstanding building in Southern California.

Numerous professional builders, both master carpenters and brick-masons, gained reputations constructing residential properties. John Barber, John Coleman, Lemuel Grant, and Robert Booker were known to have constructed commercial buildings as well.

Only two of the commercial buildings associated with these men are extant. One is Redding's Lorenz Hotel (1904), and the other is the old administration building at Fresno City College (1915). Booker's Black contemporaries credit him with the Lorenz building's construction, although no documents have been found to corroborate this testimony. Black people, witnesses to construction of the old administration building, say that the Grant brothers (Los Angeles-based Black brickmasons) were retained to complete the detailed masonry around the building's windows and archways. Their White contemporaries, however, dispute the validity of this claim. For neither building have any documents been located to verify the builder's name.



Boyers House, Santa Clara County

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2. **African Methodist Episcopal Church Site (Grass Valley)**, Nevada County
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4. **African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church**, Shasta County
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6. **Allen Chapel A.M.E. Church**, Riverside County
7. Allensworth, Tulare County
8. "Athletics," San Francisco
9. **Bass House**, Riverside County
10. Beckwourth Cabin/Trading Post, Plumas County
11. **Bell Mountain Community/Sidewinder Well Site**, San Bernardino County
12. **Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church**, Yuba County
13. Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church Site, Sacramento County
14. Biddy Mason Home Site, Los Angeles County
15. **Bishop House**, Stanislaus County
16. **Bon Ton Restaurant**, San Diego County
17. Booker T. Washington Community Service Center, San Francisco
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 56. **Hoover House**, Alameda County
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61. **Johnson's Buggy and Blacksmith Shop**, Riverside County
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71. **Mercantile Block/Stoke-Wiley Store**, Riverside County
 72. **Miller's Cafe and Casino**, Riverside County
 73. **Mitchell House**, Tehama County
 74. **Mt. Shasta Baptist Church**, Siskiyou County
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 76. **Murray's Dude Ranch**, San Bernardino County
 77. **Nathan Harrison Grade Monument**, San Diego County
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 79. **Orr's Ranch**, Fresno County
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82. **Pogue/Gibbons House**, Yuba County
 83. **Quarters (Lincoln Heights)**, Siskiyou County
 84. **Red Bluff African Methodist Episcopal Church**, Tehama County
 85. **Reynolds Shoeshine Parlor**, Riverside County
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91. **Second Baptist Church**, San Joaquin County
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A History of Chinese Americans in California: INTRODUCTION

This report concentrates on the early decades of Chinese American history, 1850 to 1900. Limiting our scope in time has made it possible to search for endangered resources in all 58 counties of the state, instead of restricting our activity to the leading 10 or 12 counties. In consultation with members of the Chinese American community, the survey research team set this priority because of the importance of ascertaining true settlement patterns, occupations, lifestyles, responses to discrimination, and survival of early Chinese immigrants.

Information on these subjects in nineteenth-century newspapers and other written records is filled with caricatures and derogatory epithets. Yet these sources are often quoted even today because of the scarcity of written documentation on certain aspects of Chinese American history. Because of this, the value of the survey of Chinese American historic sites goes beyond simple recognition of certain historic buildings and places. The location, type, and historic significance of those buildings and places provide valuable information about patterns of early Chinese American life.

The term "Chinese American" is used here in its broadest sense, to include both citizens and non-citizens. The reason is that until 1943, Chinese immigrants (with few exceptions) were prevented by law from becoming naturalized citizens of this country. Because such legislation was discriminatory, it seems only fair to include as Chinese Americans permanent residents who spent most of their lives in the United States, and whose major achievements or contributions were in the United States. Even many of those who in their final years returned to China to die left their children and grandchildren in this country.

Chinese American history is a living, continuous history, as shown by the numbers of fourth-, fifth-, and sixth-generation Chinese Americans in California and elsewhere in the United States. To make this clear in the survey, some historic sites from the early twentieth century were included. The early Chinese immigrant population did not die out but survived despite racial violence, discriminatory legislation, restrictive covenants, and limited opportunity. Amid the increased numbers of Chinese immigrants in recent years, it should be remembered that not all Chinese Americans are recent arrivals.



Fresno Chinese American Community, Fresno County

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A History of Chinese Americans in California: EARLY CONTACTS

Considerable evidence exists to substantiate the early exploration of the west coast of North America by Chinese adventurers, priests, and merchants. [1] In fact, there were early Chinese immigrants to Mexico before those in California, [2] and a number of Chinese in California during Spanish rule. One of those was Ah Nam, the cook who worked for Governor Pablo Vicente de Sola in Monterey in 1815. [3]

The west coast of North America in the nineteenth century was known to Chinese sailors who were employed on American ships, or who fished off the coast of California in Chinese junks. As early as 1848, it was advocated in the United States that Chinese workers be encouraged to come to this country to provide inexpensive farm labor. [4]

Trade Relations with China

Since pre-revolutionary days, trade has been carried on between this country and China. The tea dumped into Boston Harbor at the outset of the American Revolution was from China, and many colonial homes displayed ceramic wares and other objects from China. Even before colonial times, the desire to find a new sea route to China led to the coming of some Europeans to this continent. Under these circumstances, it was natural that California should develop trade relations with China.

Building materials were in great demand in early California because of the sudden increase in population brought about by the Gold Rush. Pre-fabricated buildings and materials were shipped from the East Coast by way of Cape Horn, or were imported from other countries overseas.

One of the best-known examples of prefabricated buildings imported from China was Parrott's Granite Block building in San Francisco for which pre-cut granite blocks were shipped to the United States. [5] Chinese stonemasons came also, and on June 8, 1852, they went on strike for higher wages. [6] This earliest recorded strike by early Chinese immigrants is of considerable significance since it shows their concern for equal pay for equal work.

Of all buildings prefabricated in China and exported to the United States, the earliest one still standing is the Double Springs Courthouse in Calaveras County. It was constructed in 1850 from pre-cut camphor wood. [7]

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A History of Chinese Americans in California: THE 1850s

Lifestyles Of Early Immigrants

Most Chinese immigrants entered California through the port of San Francisco. They developed a Chinese American community there, and made an effort to participate in the political and cultural life of the city. In 1850, they attended a religious meeting and received copies of Christian religious writings, marched in a funeral procession for President Zachary Taylor, and participated in festivities celebrating California's admission into the Union. In 1852, several prominent Chinese Americans took part in the Fourth of July Parade in San Francisco. [8]

Chinese Americans in San Francisco also sought to preserve some of their own cultural traditions. In 1851, they celebrated the lunar new year in the traditional way. [9] In 1852, the first performance of Cantonese opera was held in the American Theatre on Sansome Street, and several months later, the first Chinese theatre building was completed. [10] Two Chinese-language newspapers began publishing in 1854 and 1855. [11]

The Kong Chow Association is generally believed to have been the first organization established among Chinese in the United States. Early Cantonese who arrived in San Francisco in 1849 were apparently from the Sun Wui and Hawk Shan districts (which make up the Kong Chow Association). [12] The exact date when the Kong Chow Temple was first built is unknown, but documentary evidence suggests that it was in existence as early as 1853. [13]

Rivaling the Kong Chow Association as the first organization established among Chinese in the United States was the Chew Yick Association. On December 10, 1849, 300 members of the latter organization elected Norman As-sing, a prominent San Francisco merchant, as their leader. As-sing claimed to be an American citizen, naturalized in Charleston, South Carolina and converted to Christianity. He had a greater knowledge of American customs and language than most other early Chinese Americans. At his Macao and Woosung Restaurant on the corner of Kearny and Commercial streets, about a block from Portsmouth Plaza, he gave banquets at which he entertained local politicians and policemen. He often represented the Chinese American community on formal occasions, and served as an interpreter. [14]

Tong K. Achick was among a group of Chinese immigrants arriving in San Francisco in 1851 who had learned English and some American customs at mission schools in China. He was instrumental in founding the Yeong Wo Association for immigrants from his native district of Heung Shan. Later, he

and Norman As-sing became rivals for leadership of the Chinese American community in San Francisco. [15]

Not all of the early Chinese pioneers landed in San Francisco. One location along the coast of California where early Chinese landed and where their descendants have remained is the city of Mendocino, which was a port for the California lumber industry. The only historic building remaining from this early Chinese American community is the Mo Dai Miu, or Temple of Kuan Kung. [16]

Religion

Taoism was the religion of most of the early Chinese immigrants, and Kuan Kung was the most popular deity. Kuan Yu (later called Kuan Kung) was an actual person who had lived in China during the Three Kingdoms Period (third century, A.D.). He has sometimes been referred to as the god of war, but this designation is misleading. He was a military leader renowned for his courage, loyalty, and adherence to lofty ideals. He was even known to have sacrificed his personal success when it would have required him to compromise his principles. These qualities are the reasons he was venerated after his death, and became so popular among the early Cantonese who came to this country. [17]

The Taoist temple was a source of strength for early Chinese American pioneers. Worship was usually done individually, rather than in congregations. Respect for deities and departed relatives was shown by offerings of incense, accompanied by food and drink on special occasions. Paper offerings (in the form of money, clothing, etc.) were burned, since burning was viewed as a means of transmitting objects from the visible to the invisible world.

Prayers were offered silently in the heart before the altar. Questions were asked of various deities, usually by writing the question on a piece of paper and then burning it on the altar. An answer was obtained by consulting the prayer sticks (sometimes called fortune sticks), which had to be interpreted by the priest or deacon of the temple. Evidence suggests that most frontier Taoist temples were supervised by deacons rather than ordained priests. [18]

The Taoist temple was also a social center and a focal point for early Chinese American communities. The first and fifteenth days of the lunar month were days of worship, when people often met at the temple. Each spring, a "bomb day" festival was held in most temples. [19] The highlight of the festival was the shooting off of a rocket (or "bomb") containing lucky rings. The temple also provided some social services, such as lodging for travelers.

Legal Status Of Early Immigrants

The United States Constitution in the 1850s reserved the right of naturalization for White immigrants to this country. [20] It recognized only two skin colors, White and Black. Since early Chinese immigrants were neither Black nor White, some were allowed to become naturalized citizens, but most were not. Without citizenship, they could not vote or hold government office, and had no voice in determining their future in this country. They were designated as "aliens ineligible for citizenship," and as such were unable to own land or file mining claims. [21]

Chinese American miners reworked old claims at times and in places where they were prevented by law or racial violence from filing their own claims. Especially after it was ruled that Chinese could not testify in court against Whites, [22] the only reasonable course of action was to try to avoid open confrontation. or direct competition with Whites.

In later years public-spirited Chinese Americans who accumulated money in excess of their needs often sent money back to China to build schools and hospitals. [23] They retained their Chinese citizenship, since they were not allowed to become citizens of the United States. They could not vote, hold public office, or be employed by the State. Their future here was uncertain, even though they paid taxes and contributed to the economy of the country.

Fishing

Exactly when the Chinese began to fish off the coast of California is unknown, but oral tradition states that fishing began before gold was discovered. There were early communities in Monterey, San Diego, and San Luis Obispo counties, whose inhabitants fished for squid, abalone, and various kinds of fish. As early as 1854, there was a fishing village on Rincon Point in San Francisco. [24]

Chinese began fishing for shrimp in California probably around the mid-1860s. Numerous villages or "shrimp camps" were established on the shores of both San Francisco and San Pablo bays. China Camp in Marin County was one of the largest and longest-lived of these camps. Shrimp fishing was a long-established industry in China. Many immigrant Chinese arrived with knowledge of fishing and preservation techniques necessary to develop a shrimping enterprise in California. [25]

In the early days, when there was little demand for fresh shrimp in the United States, most of the shrimp catch was dried and sent back to China. Later, as the demand for fresh shrimp grew in California, Chinese American shrimp fishermen came under increasing pressure from other fishing groups. Discriminatory legislation was passed that required the purchase of special licenses, forbade traditional Chinese fishing techniques, limited the fishing season, prohibited export of dried shrimp, and restricted the size of the catch. [26] As the population of China Camp dwindled, only the Quan family persisted and adapted to new regulations and changing technology. Today, Frank Quan is the last Chinese American shrimp fisherman there.

Chinese Americans also worked in fish canneries which processed the fish that other fishermen caught. For example, most of the employees at the salmon cannery in Del Norte County, established by the Occident and Orient Commercial Company in 1857, were Chinese immigrants. [27]

Immigration

As soon as news of the discovery of gold in California reached China, there was a dramatic increase in the numbers of Chinese immigrants to the west coast of the United States. Most of the immigrants came from Kuangtung Province in Southern China. That section of China had previously had contact with the West through the port of Canton. The reasons many Chinese emigrated were the series of wars, rebellions, civil disorders, floods, famines, and

droughts that wracked China, and made earning a livelihood difficult in their native land. [28] A particular humiliation was the defeat of China by the British in the Opium War of 1840, after the Chinese sought to cut off the British importation of opium into China. [29]

To be better prepared for whatever difficulties might lie ahead, the Chinese often emigrated in self-help groups from the same village, often with the same surname. Because few of them knew the language and customs of California, they formed larger self-help groups consisting of people with the same surname or from the same region. Most had to borrow money for their passage to California, and were required to repay this debt from their earnings here. Those who could not borrow from their families borrowed from agencies under the credit-ticket system. [30] Attempts to bring Chinese workers to the United States as contract laborers were stymied by the absence of any means to enforce the contracts. [31]

The term "coolie" refers to contract laborers whose contract specified conditions approximating servitude, slavery, or peonage. Use of this term with regard to early Chinese immigrants to this country is incorrect. Widespread use of the term "coolie" to persuade American voters that all Chinese immigrants were slaves, and that their immigration to the United States ought to be prohibited, has given the term racist connotations.

Technology Brought From China

The presence of the ailanthus tree (the so-called "Tree of Heaven") throughout California has long been a puzzle. The tree is native to China, but not to the United States; yet it grows profusely in those regions where early Chinese immigrants lived. All sorts of fanciful explanations are given — that the Chinese accidentally brought the seeds to this country in the cuffs of their trousers (their trousers did not have cuffs), or that the Chinese brought the seeds to this country because they were homesick. The real reason Chinese immigrants brought ailanthus seeds to this country is that the trees are thought to contain an herbal remedy beneficial for arthritis. [32] The Chinese "wedding plant" was also brought to this country as an herbal remedy, but is less easily recognized.

Herbal medicine fulfilled an important health need in the nineteenth century for both Chinese and non-Chinese alike. Western medicine had not yet developed wonder drugs, anaesthetics, vaccinations, or sophisticated surgical techniques. Patent medicines were widely used, and their contents were not regulated by any agency of the government. Drastic measures, such as bleeding, were sometimes resorted to. On the other hand, Chinese herbal remedies had one to two thousand years of use behind them. In fact, some so-called "wonder drugs" are actually synthesized forms of various herbs. Even today, some medically trained Chinese Americans prefer some herbs to their synthesized forms because the natural herbs have no side effects. [33]

One of the ancient building techniques brought from China was construction using rammed earth. While adobe and rammed earth are often associated with Spanish and Mexican cultures, rammed earth was a construction technique in use in China as early as 1500 B.C. This technique involves packing mud between wooden forms and hammering it until it becomes as hard as stone. It is an inexpensive building technique, but it is vulnerable to rains and dampness.

When it is used in South China, where the weather is often damp, buildings are faced with stone for added protection. [34]

Mining

After gold was discovered in California, Chinese immigrants joined the ranks of gold seekers from all over the world. But when they arrived in the gold fields, they were greeted by racial discrimination.

In 1850, the California Legislature passed a law taxing all foreign miners 20 dollars a month. Although stated in general terms, it was enforced chiefly against Mexicans and Chinese. [35]

In May 1852, at Foster and Atchinson's Bar in Yuba County, a meeting was held and a resolution was passed denying Chinese the right to hold claims and requiring all Chinese to leave. [36] This was followed by a mass meeting in the Columbia Mining District in the southern mines, where a resolution was passed to exclude "Asiatics and South Sea Islanders" from mining activities. [37] In 1855, an anti-Chinese convention was held in Shasta County to expel the Chinese from mining claims. [38] Shortly afterward, the California Legislature passed an act to discourage immigration to the state by persons who could not become citizens and who were, for the most part, Chinese. [39]

One of the earliest acts of racial violence against Chinese immigrants took place in 1856, when white miners from outlying camps marched down to Yreka's Chinese American community, destroyed property, and beat up Chinese Americans. [40]

Despite hostility and discrimination, Chinese continued to immigrate to California to avail themselves of whatever opportunities awaited them here. When they were prevented from mining gold in the mining districts, they became merchants, laborers, or laundrymen, or sought employment elsewhere.

Construction

Chinese immigrants built many of the flumes and roads in the mining districts. In Mariposa County in the 1850s, the Big Gap Flume was constructed by Chinese workers of the Golden Rock Water Company to cross Conrad Gulch and carry water in a gravity flow system to gold mining areas. This wooden flume, suspended by trestle works, was part of a 36-mile ditch supplying water for miners in Garrotte, Big Oak Flat, Moccasin Creek, and other nearby areas. [41]

Throughout California, there are stone walls that are said to have been built by Chinese American workers in the nineteenth century. They are usually made from uncut field stones, without the use of mortar. The stones were obtained by clearing the surrounding land for pasture or farming. The best-documented stone walls built by Chinese American workers are on the Quick Ranch in Mariposa County. They are built over rolling hills, rather than on level land. The fact that they are still standing today is evidence of the skill of the workers. [42]

In 1852, at the same time anti-Chinese meetings were being held in the gold mining districts, Governor John McDougal, in his annual message to the

California Legislature, gave the first official endorsement to employment of Chinese immigrants in projects to reclaim swamps and flooded lands. [43] Only a few Chinese immigrants worked on reclamation projects in the 1850s, but most of the workers who drained swamps and built levees in the 1860s and 1870s were Chinese Americans.

Many early roads in California were built by Chinese immigrants. Del Norte County, Chinese Americans built trails and roads eastward through dense forests and rugged mountains to the communities of Low Divide, Altaville, and Gasquet, and to the state of Oregon. [44] In Lake County, Chinese Americans built the Bartlett Toll Road through the hills east of Clear Lake. [45]

Viticulture

Chinese immigrants also provided essential labor for development of the wine industry in California. They built and worked for small wineries like the John Swett Winery in Contra Costa County. [46] They were employed by Colonel Agostin Haraszthy in his Buena Vista Vineyards in Sonoma County, the first modern commercial vineyard in California, and later worked at the Beringer Brothers Winery in Napa County in 1876. [47] Chinese Americans also worked in vineyards in Southern California, and even constructed the buildings of the Brookside Winery in San Bernardino County from bricks they themselves made. [48]

Agriculture

Since most of the early Chinese immigrants were from farming areas in Kuangtung Province in China, it was natural for them to become involved in agriculture in this country. Few of them were able to become independent farmers because most were not citizens and were prevented from owning land by local laws and restrictive covenants. Many had truck gardens in which they raised vegetables and fruit they sold door to door. Others were sharecroppers or tenant farmers, who leased land and paid the landlord part of their crop. Most were migrant farm laborers.

Chinese American farm labor was essential to the development of various crops which required special skill and care. Early Chinese immigrants were the only ones who could grow celery, and were the main labor force for the Earl Fruit Company in Orange County. [49] Development of the citrus industry in Riverside County was dependent on Chinese American workers. [50] Chinese American farmers grew strawberries, peanuts, rice, and other fruits and vegetables. [51] Chinese American migrant farm workers harvested wheat, other grains, hops, apples, grapes, and pears and processed them for shipping.

One of the occupations in which Chinese Americans faced little competition was seaweed farming. This appears to involve the simple but laborious task of gathering edible seaweed from the rocks where it grows, drying it in the sun, and packing it for shipment. Actually, if more than one crop is desired, rocks must be prepared for the succeeding crop by burning off inedible seaweed. Otherwise, inedible seaweed will take over, and will prevent edible seaweed from growing back. Many of these seaweed farms were located along the coast of San Luis Obispo County. [52]

Vegetable gardens were often located on land no one else wanted. One Chinese

American farmer raised vegetables on an isolated island called Way-Aft-Whyle in Clear Lake, Lake County, in the 1880s. [53] All supplies had to be obtained from stores in a distant town, then transported by boat to the island. The vegetables raised had to be taken to shore, then carried all the way to town to be sold. Since the island is barely above water level, it could easily be inundated in storms.



Immigration Station at Angel Island, Marin County [circa 1910]

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A History of Chinese Americans in California: THE 1860s

Discriminatory Legislation

In 1860, two discriminatory laws were passed in California. One forbade Chinese American children to attend public schools. The other required a special license to be purchased by Chinese American fishermen. It was called a license instead of a tax because unequal taxation was forbidden by law (in other words, it was illegal to tax Chinese fishermen and not Italian or Portuguese fishermen). [54]

In 1862, the first nationwide discriminatory legislation singling out Chinese (or Mongolians, as they were often called) and not vaguely directed at "foreign miners" or "aliens ineligible for citizenship" was passed. The United States Congress passed a "Cooly Traffic Law" prohibiting transportation and importation of coolies from China, except when immigration was certified as voluntary by United States consular agents. [55] Shortly afterward, the California legislature passed an act to protect free White labor against competition from Chinese coolie labor, and to discourage immigration of Chinese into the state of California. [56]

A "police tax" law was passed, whereby all Mongolians 18 years or over, unless they had already paid a miner's tax or were engaged in production of sugar, rice, coffee, or tea, had to pay a monthly personal tax of \$2.50. This was ruled unconstitutional by the State Supreme Court in 1863. [57]

Manufacturing

Chinese immigrant labor was first employed on a large scale in the cigar industry in 1859. Soon, some Chinese Americans set up their own cigar factories. As early as 1866, half of the cigar factories were owned by Chinese Americans, and by 1870, more than 90 percent of the total labor force in the cigar industry was Chinese American. A vigorous anti-Chinese campaign in the early 1880s eliminated Chinese American labor in cigar-making factories.

The industry declined rapidly thereafter. [58]

The woolen mills in California were founded on Chinese labor. White workers, except for foremen, were rare in the early 1860s. [59] Employment of Chinese Americans in shoe manufacturing can be attributed, in part, to their availability and their manual skill. Chinese Americans were first employed in shoe manufacturing in 1869, but worked in slipper factories prior to that time. By 1870, Chinese Americans owned a number of shoe factories. [60] The entry of

Chinese American firms into clothing manufacturing dated from the late 1860s, and Chinese American firms and laborers soon dominated the ready-made clothing trade. [61] In addition, numerous Chinese Americans were employed in the manufacturing of soap, candles, watches, brushes, brooms, glues, bricks, powder, whips, and paper bags. [62]

Anti-Chinese elements in the labor union movement forced most Chinese Americans out of manufacturing. Union members charged that the less expensive labor of Chinese Americans was causing White unemployment and an economic depression. The real culprit was the transcontinental railroad, which brought unemployed European immigrants and cheap manufactured goods from the East Coast. Without reliable, efficient, less expensive Chinese labor, most of the factories went out of business because they could not compete with cheaper Eastern goods. Of the early manufacturers, only the garment industry has survived in California, and it continues to employ Chinese Americans and other minorities. [63]

The Lumber Industry

There were Chinese American lumberjacks in Del Norte, Humboldt, and Mendocino counties, but racial prejudice soon forced them out of that occupation. Some remained in the lumber camps as cooks and laborers. [64]

In Truckee in Nevada County, Chinese American men worked not only as lumberjacks, but also as mill hands, ice cutters, and teamsters. Most Chinese American women there were employed as railroad laborers. [65]

Railroad Construction

The most impressive construction feat of Chinese Americans was the work done on the western section of the transcontinental railroad. The groundbreaking ceremony for the Central Pacific Railroad took place in Sacramento in 1863, but Chinese American workers were not hired until 1865. From 1863 to 1865, less than 50 miles of running track had been laid, and this was over relatively level land. The construction superintendent, J. H. Strobridge, was slow to hire Chinese workers, even though they had been employed on the California Central Railroad and were praised for their work by the *Sacramento Union* in 1858. [66]

Chinese American workers built the section of the railroad through the foothills and over the high Sierra Nevada. They set explosive charges at precarious heights around Cape Horn in the Sierra. At Donner Summit, they worked and lived under the snow. They dug chimneys and air shafts, and lived by lantern light, tunneling their way from the camps to the portal of the tunnel to work long underground shifts. A labyrinth of passageways developed under the snow. The corridors were sometimes wide enough to allow two-horse sleds to move through freely, and were as much as 200 feet long. Through them, workmen traveled back and forth, digging, blasting, and removing the rubble. However, loss of life was heavy, for snow slides sometimes carried away whole camps. [67]

In 1867, 2,000 Chinese American workers went on strike, but were unsuccessful in obtaining the same higher wages and shorter hours as White men. [68] On completion of the railroad, their work was acknowledged by E.

B. Crocker in Sacramento, who said: "I wish to call to your minds that the early completion of this railroad we have built has been in large measure due to that poor, despised class of laborers called the Chinese, to the fidelity and industry they have shown." [69]

It was at Auburn that the Central Pacific Railroad first began hiring Chinese Americans for railroad construction. The Chinese American community in Auburn had been founded by gold miners, and increased in size with the influx of railroad workers. The community has survived, along with two pioneering families, the Kee family and the Yue family. Charlie Yue is said to have been the first licensed Chinese American gold assayer in California. [70]

Another town along the route of the railroad is Dutch Flat, where Theodore Judah and D. W. Strong made the original subscription to build the first transcontinental railroad. [71] Little is mentioned of Chinese American residents of the town, who numbered 2,000 in 1860. The transcontinental railroad is often credited to Judah's "vision" without acknowledging that visions do not become realities without hard work, and that the railroad could not have been built at that time without Chinese American workers. [72] One building remains of the Chinese American community in Dutch Flat, a vacant store constructed of rammed earth.

Mining for Borax and Other Minerals

Borax was first discovered in Borax Lake in Lake County in 1856, by Dr. John Veatch. Four years later, he found borax in Little Borax Lake, four miles to the west. The California Borax Company operated at the big lake between 1864 and 1868, extracting 590 tons of borax. The operations caused a terrible stench, endured willingly only by Chinese Americans, who had been driven out of the gold mining areas and could not find other employment because of racial discrimination.

In 1868, the company moved all of its operations to Little Borax Lake. This small lake supplied the entire borax needs of the country from 1868 to 1873, the last year of operation, producing 140 tons valued at \$89,600. The discovery of enormous beds of the mineral in the deserts of California and Nevada ended all production in Lake County. [73]

Chinese American workers were needed at Harmony Borax Works in Death Valley since they would work there year-around, even in the extreme heat of summer. In addition to gathering the dry borax, they also built roads across the desert and repaired them after storms. [74]

Quicksilver (mercury) mines also employed Chinese Americans. They are known to have worked at the New Almaden Mine in Santa Clara County, at the quicksilver mine in San Luis Obispo County, and at the Sulphur Banks Quicksilver Mine in Lake County. Mining quicksilver was hazardous because of the noxious fumes, which could cause death or disability. The Sulphur Banks Quicksilver Mine contained an additional hazard in the underground hot springs, which flowed around the quicksilver deposits and could scald miners to death. [75]

Economic Impacts

When the transcontinental railroad was completed in 1869, its backers expected it to bring prosperity to California. Instead, it brought an economic depression. The railroad flooded California's markets with cheap manufactured goods from the East Coast, and made many of California's fledgling manufacturing industries non-competitive. This situation was exacerbated when the railroad brought large numbers of unemployed European immigrants to California from the East Coast. [76]

A scapegoat was needed, so the economic depression was blamed on unemployed Chinese American railroad workers. Actually, they were eagerly sought for employment in other parts of the country. In January 1870, 250 Chinese were employed by General John C. Walker for construction of the Houston and Texas Railroad. [77] In February, the Colorado legislature passed a joint resolution welcoming Chinese immigrants "to hasten the development and early prosperity of the territory by supplying the demand for cheap labor." [78]

In June 1870, 75 Chinese Americans arrived in North Adams, Massachusetts to work in Calvin T. Simpson's shoe factory. In September, 68 Chinese Americans went to Belleville, New Jersey to work in the Passaic Steam Laundry. In 1872, 70 Chinese Americans arrived in Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania to work in the Beaver Falls Cutlery Company. [79] In 1873, Chinese American workers were brought to Indianapolis, Indiana, and to Augusta, Georgia to work on construction projects. [80] It appears that there were not enough Chinese American workers, for in 1870, 200 Chinese were brought from Hong Kong to work in the Arkansas Valley. [81]

While some of these workers were used as strikebreakers, it should be kept in mind that White unions would not allow Chinese Americans to join them at that time. Furthermore, White unions would not support strikes by Chinese American workers, nor would they agree to the principle of equal pay for equal work, regardless of race. [82]

Rather than damaging the economy and bringing on a depression, which they were charged with doing, Chinese Americans greatly aided the development of the state of California. A full assessment of their contribution has not yet been made, but their contribution in land reclamation and railroad construction alone is impressive. Reclaimed lands, which originally cost \$1 to \$3 per acre, increased in value from \$20 up to \$100 per acre. In the mid-1870s, a former surveyor general of the state estimated that the increase in the value of the property in the state due to Chinese labor building the railroads and reclaiming tule lands was \$289,700,000. [83]

Settlement Patterns

In Chinese, San Francisco was known as Dai Fou ("the big city"). Sacramento, which many Chinese miners passed through on the way to the northern mines, was known as Yi Fou ("the second city"). Marysville, which was the supply center for the northern mines, was called Sam Fou ("the third city"). In all, there were 286 cities or towns with such large Chinese American populations in 1870 that the names of these cities and towns were translated into Chinese characters phonetically. Wells Fargo Express Company agents had to learn these names in order to deliver mail and packages from China. [84]

Early Chinese immigrants settled throughout California. By 1860, they had settled in all but five counties of the state, and by 1870, they lived in every county, working in a wide variety of occupations. [85] The first permanent Chinese settlement in Los Angeles was made in 1856, when three men decided to stay there. Within four years, they had been joined by at least 16 others. [86] In the 1860s, Chinese workers were brought to Santa Barbara County from Canton by Colonel W. W. Hollister to work on his Goleta Valley estate and to serve as bus boys, chefs, and waiters in his hotel. [87]

Segregation of Chinese Americans began in the mining districts, where Chinese Americans were forced to live in the least desirable sections of towns. In Marysville, Yreka, and elsewhere, Chinese Americans could live only along the river, which was subject to flooding. In Mendocino, they could live only on the swampy headlands next to the ocean. In Fiddletown in Amador County, there was no undesirable section of town, so a natural boundary, a stream that ran across the main street, was used to divide the Chinese American from the White section of town. While some White businesses were allowed to locate in the Chinese section, no Chinese American homes or businesses were permitted in the White section of Fiddletown. [88]

Once segregated, Chinese American communities were often denied public services available to other taxpayers. By the 1860s, the city of Ventura in Ventura County had a community of about 200 Chinese Americans. Recent evidence has been uncovered to show that they were denied use of Ventura's water and sewer facilities. They probably could not rely on the municipal fire department either, for in 1876 they established their own fire brigade with a two-wheeled cart and 100 feet of hose. This company was active for at least 30 years, and was often mentioned as being first on the scene. [89]

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A History of Chinese Americans in California: THE 1870s

Racial Violence

One of the most savage and brutal events involving Chinese Americans was the Los Angeles Massacre on October 24, 1871. The incident began with a quarrel between Chinese, who shot at each other. The shooting attracted a large crowd of White spectators. When one of the spectators was accidentally shot and killed, the crowd began to riot and to threaten any Chinese Americans in the vicinity. Homes and businesses were looted. It has been estimated that the loss to Chinese Americans in money was from \$30,000 to \$70,000. Later, the coroner's jury reported that 19 Chinese Americans had died at the hands of a mob on October 24, 1871, and that only one of them was implicated in the shooting of the White man. The leaders of the mob escaped punishment. [90]

A series of fires destroyed Chinese American communities in Yreka (1871), Chico (1873), and Weaverville (1874). [91] In 1874, a meeting was held in Fresno to prevent Chinese Americans from moving into the White section of town. [92] Anti-Chinese riots in San Francisco began at a meeting of the Workingmen's Party and lasted three days, during which Chinese American property was looted and burned and several Chinese were killed. [93]

After a White rancher was murdered, allegedly by a Chinese, Rocklin's Chinese American buildings were pulled down and set afire along with buildings at China Gardens on the outskirts of town, and the people were given just a few hours to leave town. Because of the Rocklin incident in Placer County, Chinese Americans were also expelled from Loomis, Penryn, Grass Valley, and other nearby towns; they fled to Folsom for safety. [94]

The Anti-Chinese Movement

Chinese Americans who faced discrimination in other occupations often set up laundry businesses to earn a living. Chinese laundries at first faced no competition, since washing and cooking were considered women's occupations unsuitable for self-respecting White men. However, as laundries provided a steady income, many Chinese American laundrymen prospered. Men of other nationalities began to reconsider the laundry business, and set up competing establishments. In 1876, the Anti-Chinese and Workingmen's Protective Laundry Association was incorporated in San Jose. Subsequently, many laundries, like the Hi Chung Laundry in Elmira, Solano County, went out of business. [95]

In San Francisco, a series of discriminatory local laws was passed in the early

1870s. The Cubic Air Ordinance regulated the size of living and working quarters. The Sidewalk Ordinance forbade the use of poles, such as Chinese traditionally used, to carry bundles. The Queue Ordinance required Chinese in jail to cut their queues (their long braided hair), even though they would not be able to return to China without them. A series of laundry ordinances required Chinese American laundries to pay higher taxes than other laundries, and regulated the types of buildings in which laundry businesses could be housed.

Enactment of these local laws was followed by a series of lawsuits by Chinese Americans who succeeded in overturning all except the Sidewalk Ordinance. The most celebrated lawsuit was the Yick Wo Laundry Case, whose owner Lee Yick successfully challenged the validity of a law that would have been used to drive the Chinese out of the laundry business. In addition, his lawsuit established the principle that a law is discriminatory, even if its wording is not discriminatory, if it is applied in a discriminatory manner. [96]

Some discriminatory legislation was challenged by White business men who needed Chinese American workers. When the California Legislature passed a law prohibiting corporations holding state charters from employing "any Chinese or Mongolian," the president of Sulphur Bank Mine in Lake County defied the law and had it nullified. [97]

A law requiring the San Francisco Board of Supervisors to increase the size of the police force was passed in 1878. However, special police were still needed to supplement the regular force, and could be hired to protect businesses and property throughout the city except in the Chinese Quarter. The new law prohibited the employment of special police within the Chinese Quarter, the boundaries of which were set by police commissioners. [98] One of the results of this law was to encourage the growth of tongs, providing protection otherwise lacking.

Establishment of boundaries for the so-called "Chinese Quarter" shows that Chinese Americans who at first were able to live throughout the city had, by 1878, been segregated into one section of the city. The fact that boundaries were to be established from time to time by police commissioners suggests that police may have had a role in enforcing segregation. Prohibition of special police officers for the Chinese Quarter indicates a denial of equal or sufficient law enforcement.

Continuous agitation by anti-Chinese organizations and labor unions led to a congressional hearing on the question of Chinese immigration in San Francisco in 1876. Although congressional committees recommended prohibition of Chinese immigration, this could not be done until the Burlingame Treaty between China and the United States was amended.

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A History of Chinese Americans in California: THE 1880s

Exclusion

The Burlingame Treaty was amended in 1880. After steadily mounting agitation, the Chinese Exclusion Law was passed in 1882 by the United States Congress, and signed by President Chester A. Arthur. Under this law, Chinese laborers, unskilled or skilled, were excluded from entering the United States for 10 years. Only merchants, diplomats, tourists, students, and teachers were allowed to enter the country. Under these categories, professional people, such as herbalists, were sometimes considered as laborers. Merchants could bring their wives to this country, but laborers could not. Chinese American workers were forced to decide whether they should return to China, or remain in this country to work and possibly never see their families again. [99]

Expulsion

Enactment of the Exclusion Law was followed by expulsion of Chinese Americans from various localities. Before 1885, for example, Chinese American miners faced hostility in Humboldt County despite the amount of Foreign Miners' taxes they had paid that contributed to the economy of the country. Before 1885, restaurants in Eureka, the county seat, advertised in local newspapers that they did not employ Chinese help. In addition, there was considerable agitation in the county for the Chinese Exclusion Law. Finally, on February 6, 1885, an event occurred that provided a pretext for moving all Chinese Americans out of the county and shipping them bodily to San Francisco, along with as much of their property as they could pack in 48 hours.

On February 6, Councilman David Kendall was accidentally shot and killed, allegedly by Chinese Americans. Instead of punishing the guilty, White citizens decided that all Chinese Americans must leave the country, never to return. Chinese American merchants lost the goods in their stores since they could not pack them in time, and Chinese American families lost their household furnishings. The steamer *Humboldt* carried 135 to San Francisco, and the steamer *City of Chester* took 175. When this news reached the Chinese Six Companies, they brought suit against the City of Eureka for \$6,000,000 in damages they claimed the Chinese Americans from Eureka had suffered. After several months, the suit was concluded with the ruling that the Chinese Americans should be compensated for property damage (there was none) but not for business losses, which were extensive. [100]

Del Norte County, on the coast of California north of Humboldt County,

followed suit. Citizens of Del Norte County had no particular pretext of their own, but on January 31, 1886, they expelled virtually all Chinese Americans from the county, and sent them by boat to San Francisco. [101]

Around the time of these expulsions, a series of fires occurred throughout the state, some of suspicious origin. In 1881, buildings of the Chinese American community in Dutch Flat burned a second time, causing a loss of about \$30,000 and some 60 buildings. [102] In 1886, a group of 30 masked men from Wheatland, Yuba County, raided Chinese American workers on H. Roddan's ranch, beat 11 hop pickers, then burned down the Chinese American bunkhouse on C. D. Wood's ranch. [103] In May 1887, a fire destroyed San Jose's Chinese American community under suspicious circumstances. Newspapers on the following day noted that the fire had started in three places at once and that water tanks were empty at the time. Three months earlier, the San Jose City Council had discussed the abatement of Chinatown, and had directed their attorneys to find legal ways of doing so [104] About a week after the San Jose fire, a fire destroyed about \$50,000 worth of property in Fresno's Chinese American community. There was a high wind and no water. [105] In October 1887, fire almost totally destroyed Chico's Chinese American community, and "to cap the disaster, the firehose was chopped in four places during the conflagration, evidently by persons who hated the Chinese at this time." [106]

In 1888, Congress passed the Scott Act, which barred re-entry of Chinese laborers to the United States, even if they left the country only temporarily. [107] Many men who had gone back to China to visit their families and had left property and business ventures in this country were prevented from returning. As a result of the Chinese Exclusion Law, the Scott Act, and racial discrimination, Chinese immigration to the United States showed a 40% decline between 1880 and 1890. [108] Before 1880, Chinese immigration to the United States had increased steadily.

Ironically, one of the results of the Exclusion Law and the Scott Act was a shortage of Chinese American workers. Since there were not enough of them to fill the demand, they were able to obtain a higher rate of pay. [109]

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A History of Chinese Americans in California: THE 1890s

The Gay Nineties were not carefree years for Chinese Americans or their relatives in China. In 1892, Congress passed the Geary Act, which extended the Chinese Exclusion Law of 1882 for another 10 years, and also added the requirement that all Chinese living in the United States obtain certificates of residence. Insufficient effort was made to explain this requirement to people whose understanding of English was limited, nor was the regulation sufficiently publicized. Raids by immigration authorities were conducted on various Chinese American communities, and people without residence certificates were held for [110]

Fires and racial violence forced many Chinese Americans to leave the countryside, and may have encouraged some of them to return to China. In 1893 alone, most buildings of the second Chinese American community in Riverside were destroyed by fire. [111] Five hundred Chinese American men were forced by terrorists to leave their jobs in nurseries and vineyards around Fresno. [112] There were anti-Chinese riots in Redlands, San Bernardino County, by 400 Whites, and the National Guard had to be called in. [113] The final result of discriminatory laws and racial violence during the 1880s was a 37% decrease in California's Chinese American population. [114]

The Chinese American Cemetery in Nevada City, Nevada County, is an important historic site of the 1890s. Among all segregated cemeteries that were once so numerous throughout California (since Chinese Americans were not allowed to be buried in White cemeteries), the Nevada City Chinese American Cemetery is one of the few which still has a burner for paper money and other offerings, and parts of its original fence and gate. It is the only one with a monument to a single individual, who died in 1891 and who must have been quite wealthy and influential. The name on the monument has been defaced by vandals. The size and elaborateness of the monument indicates that this was not intended as a temporary burial site, but as a permanent resting place for the deceased.



Weaverville Chinese American family, Trinity County [circa 1890]

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A History of Chinese Americans in California: THE 1900s

Quarantine And Its Aftereffects

After the turn of the century, discrimination against Chinese Americans culminated in two acts, the quarantine of San Francisco's Chinatown, and indefinite extension of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. The reason San Francisco's Chinatown was quarantined was that the body of a Chinese laborer was found, and it was suspected that he had died of bubonic plague. While the cause of death was still undetermined, a cordon was placed around Chinatown, and no Chinese American was allowed to leave the area bounded by California, Kearny, Broadway, and Stockton streets. This restricted the freedom of movement of people, some of whom were American citizens. It caused them many hardships, for they had difficulty in obtaining goods and services from people outside Chinatown. There was a shortage of food, and prices increased sharply. Chinese American businessmen faced a loss of income, and workers a loss of wages. Finally, after three and a half months, it was found that there were no cases of bubonic plague within Chinatown. This lengthy quarantine of Chinatown was motivated more by racist images of Chinese as carriers of disease than by actual evidence of the presence of bubonic plague. [115]

Chinese American pioneers lived throughout the state of California, wherever there was a chance to earn a living. But they were driven off mining claims, terrorized by vigilantes, removed on short notice from two counties and shipped to San Francisco. Once in San Francisco, they could not live where they pleased, but had to crowd together in one section of the city, the so-called "Chinese Quarter," later referred to as Chinatown. The quarantine represented the final step in segregation of San Francisco's Chinese Americans. The symbolism of the rope cordon was carried forth for four decades as an invisible boundary, beyond which Chinese Americans dared not pass without the risk of being insulted and even physically abused.

The Chinese Exclusion Law of 1882 was renewed in 1892 and 1902, and then extended indefinitely in 1904. [116] It prevented Chinese Americans who were not merchants from bringing their families to this country. Since there were far more unmarried Chinese American men than women here, and since the anti-miscegenation laws prevented Chinese American men from marrying White women, it condemned the men to bachelorhood.

Recovery From San Francisco Earthquake

These events were capped by a natural disaster, the San Francisco earthquake

and fire of 1906. Virtually all buildings in Chinatown were destroyed, and efforts were made to relocate Chinese Americans from the downtown area to less desirable portions of the city. These efforts failed, and thus represent a turning point in the fortunes of Chinese Americans. Destruction of birth certificates in the earthquake enabled some Chinese Americans to claim citizenship by reason of birth in this country. When the offices of the *Chung Sai Yat Pao* in San Francisco were destroyed, the newspaper moved to Oakland. Its editor, Dr. Ng Poon Chew, went on to become a spokesman and advocate of civil rights for the Chinese American community. [117]

When the offices of the Precita Canning Co. in San Francisco, whose officials and board of directors were all of Chinese ancestry, were destroyed in the earthquake, the company changed its name to the Bay Side Canning Co. and relocated to Alviso in Santa Clara County. It had been founded in 1890 by Sai Yin Chew, whose son, Thomas Foon Chew, later increased the size of its operations to include canning plants in Alviso, Isleton, and Mayfield, and extensive farm lands in the Sacramento Delta. Commodities canned at the Alviso plant were spinach, asparagus, cherries, apricots, plums, peaches, pears, tomatoes, catsup, tomato sauce, hot sauce, tomato puree, fish sauce, fruits for salad, vegetables for salad, and later, fruit cocktail. The Isleton Plant canned mainly spinach and asparagus. The Bay Side Canning Co. was one of the largest canning companies in the early twentieth century, even surpassing Del Monte at one time. [118]

One of the unique institutions of San Francisco's Chinatown was the Chinese American Telephone Exchange. In 1891, the first public telephone pay station was installed in Chinatown. In 1894, a small switchboard was set up to serve subscribers to the telephone system. Telephone operators knew each subscriber by name, so telephone numbers were not necessary. They also knew the address and occupations of subscribers so they could distinguish between two subscribers of the same name. In addition, they had to know several Chinese dialects besides English. Although the offices of the exchange were destroyed by the earthquake, they were rebuilt afterward, and remained in operation until 1949. [119]

Though the ambitions of many Chinese Americans were thwarted by racism and employment discrimination, these people did not give up. For example, on September 21, 1909, young Chinese American inventor and aviator Fung Joe Guey, circled through the air for 20 minutes back of Piedmont, Alameda County, in a biplane of his own manufacture, embodying his own ideas in aeroplane manufacture. [120]

The main focus of this Chinese American Survey is on nineteenth-century Chinese American historic sites. A few twentieth-century sites were included for continuity. Following are a few of the significant events in twentieth-century Chinese American history:

- After the revolutionary uprising of October 10, 1911, which led to the establishment of a republic in China, many Chinese Americans went back to China with hopes of a bright future there, free from racism, but many others remained here.
- Some Chinese Americans served in the U.S. Armed Forces in World War I, and became heroes. On June 13, 1919, Sing Kee returned home to

San Jose after receiving the Distinguished Service Cross for bravery in action with the 77th or "Liberty" Division in the Argonne Forest. He was given a hero's welcome, along with Jue Tong, another Chinese American war hero. [121] Two important historic sites from this period are the town of Locke and the immigration station on Angel Island.

- Discrimination against Asian immigrants continued in the 1920s. In 1924, the Immigration Exclusion Act was passed, which stated that all immigrants "ineligible for citizenship" were denied admission to the United States. [122] Two historic sites from the twenties are the Confucius Church and Community Center in El Centro, Imperial County, and the Wong Mansion in Stockton, San Joaquin County.
- Finally in the 1930s, restrictions began to ease. In 1930, Congress passed an act providing for admission of Chinese wives who were married to American citizens before May 26, 1924. Then in 1935, more than 15 years after the end of World War I, Public Law 162 granted several hundred Asian veterans who served in the United States Armed Forces during World War I the right to apply for United States citizenship through naturalization. [123] Two important historic sites from this period are the House of China in San Diego and the Suey Hing Benevolent Society building in Watsonville, Santa Cruz County.
- On December 13, 1943, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the momentous "Act to Repeal the Chinese Exclusion Acts, to Establish Quotas, and for Other Purposes." Although the Chinese Exclusion Acts were thus repealed, it was not until 1965 that national-origin quotas were abolished. [124]



Salinas Confucius Church, Monterey County

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Underlined sites are links to more detailed reports.

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 2. **Ah Louis Store**, San Luis Obispo County
 3. **Auburn Chinese American Cemetery**, Placer County
 4. **Auburn Chinese American Community**, Placer County
 5. **Bartlett Springs Toll Road**, Lake County
 6. **Bay Side Canning Company**, Santa Clara County
 7. **Beringer Brothers Winery**, Napa County
 8. **Big Gap Flume**, Tuolumne County
 9. **Bismark Site**, San Bernardino County
 10. **Bodie Chinese American Community**, Mono County
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11. **Bok Kai Miu**, Yuba County
 12. **Brookside Winery**, San Bernardino County
 13. **Buena Vista Store**, Amador County
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 15. **Calexico Chinese American Community Site**, Imperial County
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31. **Double Springs Courthouse**, Calaveras County
 32. **Earl Fruit Company Site**, Orange County
 33. **Eureka Chinese American Community Site**, Humboldt County
 34. **Fiddletown's Chinese American Community**, Amador County
 35. **Folsom Chinese American Cemetery**, Sacramento County

36. **Fong Wah Cemetery**, Siskiyou County
37. **Fresno Chinese American Community**, Fresno County
38. **Gasquet Toll Road**, Del Norte County
39. **Haraszthy Buena Vista Vineyards**, Sonoma County
40. **Harmony Borax Works**, Inyo County

41. **Hercules Powder Plant**, Contra Costa County
42. **Hi Chung Laundry**, Solano County
43. **Isleton Chinese American Community**, Sacramento County
44. **John Swett Winery Site**, Contra Costa County
45. **Ken Ying Low Restaurant**, Santa Clara County
46. **Kong Chow Temple Site**, San Francisco
47. **L. T. Sue Herb Co.**, Kings County
48. **Lang Station Site**, Los Angeles County
49. **Let Sing Gong**, Kern County
50. **Liet Sheng Kong**, Butte County

51. **Lincoln Chan Ranch**, Sacramento County
52. **Locke**, Sacramento County
53. **Los Angeles Chinese American Community**, Los Angeles County
54. **Los Angeles Massacre Site**, Los Angeles County
55. **Low Divide Road**, Del Norte County
56. **Markleeville Chinese American Cemetery**, Alpine County
57. **Marysville Chinese American Community**, Yuba County
58. **Ming's Store**, Amador County
59. **Mo Dai Miu (Temple of Kuan Kung)**, Mendocino County
60. **Nevada City Chinese American Cemetery**, Nevada County

61. **Old Chinese Herb Shop**, Nevada County
62. **Oriental Street**, San Bernardino County
63. **Parrott Granite Block Site**, San Francisco
64. **Peking Street**, Ventura County
65. **Quick Ranch Stone Wall**, Mariposa County
66. **Quincy Chinese American Cemetery**, Plumas County
67. **Riverside Chinese American Community Site**, Riverside County
69. **Salinas Chinese American Community**, Monterey County
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71. **San Jose Chinese American Cemetery**, Santa Clara County
72. **San Luis Obispo Chinese American Cemetery Site**, San Luis Obispo County
73. **Santa Ana Valley Irrigation Tunnel**, Orange County
74. **Santa Barbara Chinese American Community Site**, Santa Barbara County
75. **Shasta Chinese American Community**, Shasta County
76. **Sing Kee's Store**, Amador County
77. **Stone House**, El Dorado County
78. **Stone Walls**, Santa Clara County
79. **Suey Hing Benevolent Society**, Santa Cruz County
80. **Suey Sing Store**, Yuba County

81. **Sulphur Bank Mine**, Lake County
82. **Sun Sun Wo Co.**, Mariposa County
83. **Sze Yup Cemetery**, Trinity County

84. **Taoist Temple**, Kings County
 85. **Taoist Temple**, San Joaquin County
 86. **Wah Hop Store and China Bank**, El Dorado County
 87. **Walnut Grove Chinese American Community**, Sacramento County
 88. **Way-Aft-Whyle**, Lake County
 89. **Wells Fargo Co./Chinese Laundry**, Nevada County
 90. **Wheatland Chinese American Cemetery**, Yuba County
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91. **Wing Chong Store**, Monterey County
 92. **Wong Mansion**, San Joaquin County
 93. **Won Lim Miu (Temple)**, Trinity County
 94. **Yreka Chinese American Cemetery**, Siskiyou County
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A History of Japanese Americans in California: INTRODUCTION

The history of ethnic minorities in California is characterized by adversity, hard work, community initiative, heartache, triumphs, indomitable spirits, and hope for the future. People of color in the United States have often been depicted as helpless victims of discriminatory practices and legislation, with little appreciation of their strengths, how they struggled with adversity, and how they established and defined themselves in all aspects of their lives. What has been of value to their communities has frequently gone undocumented; neither their spirit nor their energy has been fully depicted. This is as true for Japanese Americans in California as for other minorities.

Concern for these matters influenced the selection of places associated with the history of Japanese Americans in California. That is, the places selected for inclusion in this report not only relate to the Japanese experience in California, they also reflect the attempts of Japanese Americans to establish themselves in all aspects of life — economically, educationally, socially, religiously, politically, and artistically. The selected properties reflect both events and actions directed against Japanese Americans, as well as the efforts they made to determine the nature and direction of their own lives.



Terminal Island, Los Angeles County [circa 1919]

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A History of Japanese Americans in California: IMMIGRATION

One of the first groups of settlers that came from Japan to the United States, the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony under the leadership of John Schnell, arrived at Cold Hill, El Dorado County, in June 1869. Additional colonists arrived in the fall of 1869. These first immigrants brought mulberry trees, silk cocoons, tea plants, bamboo roots, and other agricultural products. The U.S. Census of 1870 showed 55 Japanese in the United States; 33 were in California, with 22 living at Gold Hill. Within a few years of the colony's founding, the colonists had dispersed, their agricultural venture a failure.



Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony, El Dorado County

The 1880 Census showed 86 Japanese in California, with a total of 148 in the United States. Possibly these were students, or Japanese who had illegally left their country, since Japanese laborers were not allowed to leave their country until after 1884 when an agreement was signed between the

Japanese government and Hawaiian sugar plantations to allow labor immigration. From Hawaii, many Japanese continued on to the United States mainland. In 1890, 2,038 Japanese resided in the United States; of this number, 1,114 lived in California.

Laborers for the Hawaiian sugar plantations were carefully chosen. In 1868, a group of Japanese picked off the streets of Yokohama and shipped to Hawaii had proved to be unsatisfactory. Thereafter, a systematic method of recruiting workers from specific regions in Japan was established. Natives from Hiroshima, Kumamoto, Yamaguchi, and Fukushima were sought for their supposed expertise in agriculture, for their hard work, and for their willingness to travel. Immigrants to California from these prefectures constituted the largest numbers of Japanese in the state.

Except for a temporary suspension of immigration to Hawaii in 1900, the flow of immigration from Japan remained relatively unaffected until 1907-08, when agitation from white supremacist organizations, labor unions, and politicians resulted in the "Gentlemen's Agreement," curtailing further immigration of laborers from Japan. A provision in the Gentlemen's Agreement, however, permitted wives and children of laborers, as well as laborers who had already been in the United States, to continue to enter the country. Until that time, Japanese immigrants had been primarily male. The 1900 Census indicates that only 410 of 24,326 Japanese were female. From 1908 to 1924, Japanese women continued to immigrate to the United States, some as "picture brides."



Japanese Picture Brides at Angel Island, Marin County [circa 1919]

In Japan, arranged marriages were the rule. Go-betweens arranged marriages between compatible males and females, based on careful matching of socio-economic status, personality, and family background. With the advent of photography, an exchange of photographs became a first step in this long process. Entering the bride's name in the groom's family registry legally constituted marriage. Those Japanese males who could afford the cost of traveling to Japan returned there to be married. Others resorted to long-distance, arranged marriages. The same procedure that would have occurred if the groom were in Japan was adhered to, and the bride would immigrate to the United States as the wife of a laborer. Not all issei were married in this

manner, but many were. For wives who entered after 1910, the first glimpse of the United States was the Detention Barracks at Angel Island in San Francisco Bay. New immigrants were processed there, and given medical exams. As a result, this was the place where most "picture brides" saw their new husbands for the first time.

Those hoping to rid California of its Japanese population thought the Gentlemen's Agreement would end Japanese immigration. Instead, the Japanese population of California increased, both through new immigration and through childbirth. Anti-Japanese groups, citing the entry of "picture brides," complained that the Gentlemen's Agreement was being violated. A movement to totally exclude Japanese immigrants eventually succeeded with the Immigration Act of 1924. That legislation completely curtailed immigration from Japan until 1952 when an allotment of 100 immigrants per year was designated. A few refugees entered the country during the mid-1950s, as did Japanese wives of United States servicemen.

The pattern of immigration has left its mark on Japanese communities to this day. While immigrants before 1924 were uniformly young, the delay in immigration of women resulted in many marriages in which the husband was considerably older than the wife. Immigration of women between 1908 and 1924 also meant that the majority of children (nisei) were born within a period of 20 years, 1910-1930. Researchers during World War II noted that rather than a normal curve, the Japanese population in the United States was bi-modal — an age group for the original immigrants and another for their children. This has influenced the ways in which Japanese communities have been organized, e.g., the need every 25 years or so to have facilities and organizations oriented to children, with long periods of time when such facilities were not needed. Consequently, large numbers of nisei would enter the job market at the same time, and they would have children at about the same time. The immigration pattern is also reflected today among issei who are still living. The vast majority are women. Eighty-five percent of the clientele of Kimochi-Kai and other Japanese senior citizen organizations in California's major cities are women.

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A History of Japanese Americans in California: PATTERNS OF SETTLEMENT AND OCCUPATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

Most Japanese immigrants entered the United States through San Francisco. Other ports-of-entry were Portland, Oregon and Seattle, Washington. As a result, the first large settlement of Japanese in California was in San Francisco. U.S. Census figures trace the movement and settlement of Japanese over the years.

In 1890, 590 Japanese were in San Francisco, with 184 in Alameda County and 51 in Sacramento County. A scattering of residents appeared throughout California, with the smallest number in the Southern California area. Little is known about these early Japanese immigrants. Speculation is that they worked for the railroad, were laborers, or performed miscellaneous tasks, such as chopping wood or domestic service. By 1890, the move into agricultural work had begun in the Vacaville area, Solano County. By then a Japanese had been buried in the Visalia Public Cemetery in Tulare County, and labor contractors were beginning to gather new immigrants to work in a number of industries such as the railroads, oil fields, and agriculture.

By 1900, the same Northern California counties still had the largest numbers of Japanese, but the population had increased tremendously with movement into other parts of the state. San Francisco had 1,781 Japanese, Sacramento County 1,209, and Alameda County 1,149. In addition, Monterey County had 710, Fresno County 598, San Joaquin County 313, Santa Clara County 284, Contra Costa County 276, and Santa Cruz County 235. Agricultural work drew immigrants to what were then rural areas. In many communities, *nihonmachi* (Japanese sections of town) were developed, with establishment of small businesses catering to the needs of immigrants. By 1900, Southern California had a Japanese population of approximately 500, with the largest concentration in Los Angeles County. But already the immigrants had begun efforts to establish themselves. Ulysses Shinsei Kaneko, for example, became one of the first Japanese naturalized in California, in San Bernardino County in 1896. Businesses in towns and cities had been in operation for almost a decade. Buddhist churches and Japanese Christian churches had been established earlier. Japanese had purchased property, and a few nisei children had been born.

City trades included domestic service and businesses catering to other Japanese — boarding houses, restaurants, barbershops, bathhouses, gambling houses, and pool halls. Labor contractors drew immigrants away from the cities to work for the railroads, canneries, and farms. Japanese laborers were

an important element in California agriculture by the turn of the century.

Other immigrants initiated their own enterprises and industries. Some of these included industries the Chinese had pioneered earlier. Fishing and abalone industries developed at White Point and Santa Monica Canyon in Los Angeles County, and at Point Lobos in Monterey County. Kinji Ushijima, also known as George Shima, continued the reclamation work begun by Chinese in the Sacramento/San Joaquin Delta. Shima eventually reclaimed more than 100,000 acres of land with the help of many laborers. The land now grows potatoes, asparagus, onions, and other produce.

Between 1900 and 1910, Japanese began to buy property and establish farms, vineyards, and orchards. All-Japanese communities developed in agricultural areas in central California, including Florin in Sacramento County (which the Japanese called *Taishoku*), Bowles in Fresno County, and the Yamato Colony at Livingston in Merced County.



Yamato Colony, Merced County [circa 1911]

By 1910, a distinct change had occurred in the California Japanese population, which then numbered 41,356. A move to the southern part of the state began, and the number of women in the community steadily increased. By the late 1920s, females constituted one-third of the Japanese population. Los Angeles County became the most populous Japanese settlement, with 8,461, and has remained so to this day. A major stimulus for the move south was the rapid expansion of the Los Angeles area during the Southern California boom period. Many Japanese also migrated to Los Angeles in 1906 after the San Francisco earthquake.

San Francisco remained the second most populous, however, with 4,518 Japanese. Next came Sacramento County with 3,874, Alameda County with 3,266, Santa Clara County with 2,299, and Fresno County with 2,233. Other counties having more than 1,000 Japanese included Contra Costa, Monterey, and San Joaquin. The large increases in the population were a reflection of unrestricted immigration of male laborers until 1908, entrance of Japanese women into the United States, and the resultant increase in the birth of children. Numerous *nihonmachi* had been established in California, ranging from Selma's one block of businesses catering to Japanese in Fresno County,

to whole sections of town in San Francisco, Los Angeles, and San Jose.

The Japanese population of Los Angeles County more than doubled by 1920, increasing to 19,911, more than three times as many as the next most populous county, Sacramento, with 5,800. California's total Japanese population numbered 71,952. Fresno County had 5,732, San Francisco 5,358, and Alameda 5,221. San Joaquin County increased its population of Japanese to 4,354. Other counties with Japanese populations of more than 1,000 included Monterey, Orange, Placer, San Diego, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, and Tulare. This population increase was due almost to tally to the immigration of women and the birth of children. By this time, the economic basis of the Japanese community had been firmly established in agriculture and its offshoots — wholesaling, retailing, distributing. The Japanese organized their produce and flower industries vertically, resulting in a system in which all operations were owned and operated by Japanese, from raising the plants to retail sales. This resulted in organizations such as the Southern California Flower Market in Los Angeles, the California Flower Market in San Francisco, Lucky Produce in Sacramento, and the City Market in Los Angeles. Cooperatives like Naturipe in Watsonville, Santa Cruz County, were organized to improve the growing, packing, and marketing of crops produced by Japanese farmers.

Small businesses were numerous at this time. Many of the "city trades" were directly tied to rural occupations, particularly agricultural labor. Businesses such as boarding houses, hotels, restaurants, barber shops, and gambling houses were dependent on the constant traffic of single male laborers who traveled a circuit in California from one crop to the next, from the Imperial Valley to the Sacramento Valley. The Miyajima Hotel, a boarding house in Lodi, San Joaquin County, was one such business catering to agricultural laborers. Other city businesses were also oriented toward farming interests. For example, a number of Japanese entrepreneurs operating general merchandise stores had regular routes to the surrounding countryside, taking orders and making deliveries for food and other supplies. Kamikawa Brothers in Fresno and Tsuda's in Auburn provided this service.

During the decade of 1910-20, Japanese farmers became important producers and growers of crops: Truck farming along the coast, in the Central Valley, and in Southern California; grapes and tree fruit in the Central Valley and Southern California; strawberries in a number of different locations; and rice in Northern California. Japanese were very much involved in experimenting with different strains of rice at the Biggs Rice Experiment Station in Butte County where Kenju Ikuta demonstrated that rice could be produced commercially. In addition, a large number of other Japanese were engaged in farming, distributing, and retailing of rice during this period. In later decades, Keisaburo Koda, known among the Japanese as the "rice king," established a ranch near Dos Palos in Merced County, where he produced new strains of rice.

The 1930 census shows that Los Angeles County still had the most Japanese, almost doubling its population, to 35,390. California's Japanese population numbered 97,456. Los Angeles had more than four times as many Japanese as did the second county, Sacramento, which had 8,114. Close in number were San Francisco with 6,250, Alameda with 5,715, Fresno with 5,280, San Joaquin with 4,339, and Santa Clara with 4,320. Again, the

increase can be attributed to immigration of Japanese women as well as the birth of children. Because immigration was totally curtailed in 1924, however, the birth of children probably was the more important reason, numerically speaking. Another source for population increases was migration from other parts of the country. Some Japanese residents of Seattle, Washington, for example, moved to Los Angeles County during the 1930s because of increased economic opportunities during a period of nationwide depression.



Concord Nippon Gakko, Contra Costa County [circa 1926]

This period, however, was a time of growth for most nihonmachi throughout California. Almost every agricultural area with a population of Japanese residents had a flourishing Japanese section of town. Cooperatives established in previous years were functioning at their peak. Nisei children were in schools and beginning to enter the labor market. This subtle change can be noted in such things as Japanese-language newspapers adding English sections to their publications, and Japanese church youth organizations being organized.

The 1940 census shows little change from the 1930 figures. During this decade, the Japanese population of California decreased from 97,456 to 93,717, although a few counties like Los Angeles continued to increase. During the years 1942-45, Japanese Americans were incarcerated in 10 fenced and guarded concentration camps. Two of these camps were located in California: Manzanar in Inyo County and Tule Lake in Modoc County. The camp at Tule Lake did not close until March 1946. Encouraged by the War Relocation Authority to resettle in the East and Midwest, approximately one-third of the internees chose this alternative. Some never returned to the West Coast.

Those who did return had to rebuild lives that had been dramatically altered by the concentration camp experience. In some communities, one-third or more of the Japanese population did not return. Moreover, some nihonmachi did not survive. Non-Japanese businesses and residents had moved into sections of town previously occupied by Japanese Americans. The war was also a turning point in generational control of businesses, churches, and community politics, as the adult children of immigrants began to dominate

in all spheres of Japanese activities.

The Japanese population of California decreased to 84,956, according to the 1950 census. Los Angeles County had the largest population, with 36,761. San Francisco, Alameda, Fresno, Sacramento, and Santa Clara counties each had 4,000-6,000 Japanese residents. This period was one of intensive efforts to re-establish Japanese American communities. After serving as hostels for returning internees, churches re-instituted their usual activities and services. The struggle for economic survival began anew. Those nihonmachi able to be rebuilt were again the centers of the Japanese American community, but were less oriented to the immigrant generation. For example, during the 1930s, landscape gardening emerged as an occupation. It gained in importance after World War II as the numbers of nisei working as gardeners increased.

The decade 1950-60 saw almost a doubling of the Japanese population in California, to 157,317. Los Angeles County again led the state with 77,314, more than seven times the number in Santa Clara County, which had 10,432 Japanese residents. This large increase is generally attributed to the birth of sansei, the third generation of Japanese. A secondary but far less important reason numerically was the gradual return to the West Coast of individuals who had resettled to other areas during the World War II internment. A minor increase may also be attributed to Japanese women immigrating from Asia as wives of U.S. servicemen.

The birth of children resulted in a resurgence of activities in churches, Japanese-language schools, and athletic leagues. The Japanese population had made the transition from a rural to an urban population with the economic base less oriented to agriculture, although this was still important. In urban areas, Japanese women frequently worked in secretarial-clerical positions, while men obtained jobs in technical professional areas. This pattern generally holds true today, although with sansei children in their adult years now, there is increasing technical and professional training, and occupations of greater diversity for both males and females.



Little Tokyo, Los Angeles County [circa 1919]

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A History of Japanese Americans in California: ORGANIZATIONS AND RELIGIOUS PRACTICES

The first Japanese American community organization of record in the United States was the Gospel Society or Fukuin Kai, established in October 1877 in San Francisco. The Gospel Society offered English classes, operated a boarding house, and provided a place for Japanese to meet. With the influence of White Christians, the religious orientation of the society developed. Out of this organization eventually came the Japanese Christian churches, some of which were established in the 1890s.

The issei established three types of organizations in the communities they settled: churches, political/social organizations called by various names, and Japanese-language schools. Churches, whether Christian, Buddhist, or Shinto, were the focus of activity for most Japanese communities, and often were the earliest organizations to be established. Subsequently, churches expanded beyond religious services as women's organizations (*fujinkai*) became active, and youth groups were established with the advent of children. The churches provided both religious sustenance and a social life. It is estimated that before World War II, 85 percent of Japanese were Buddhist. Possibly the sole Japanese American community with only a Christian church was Livingston (Yamato Colony). During the World War II internment, churches served as storage centers for personal property left behind by Japanese Americans, and as hostels for returning evacuees. The churches themselves organized into umbrella groups such as the Buddhist Churches of America, the Japanese Evangelical Mission Society, the Holiness Conference, and the Northern and Southern California Christian Church Federation. Most of the original congregations still exist today.

The political/social organizations were organized under different names, depending on the community. Some of these names were *doshikai*, *kyogikai*, and *nihonjinkai* (Japanese Association). All Japanese were assumed to belong to political/social organizations which dealt with issues affecting the total Japanese American community. Often, they had their own offices or buildings for conducting business and holding meetings. Association leaders were spokespersons for the community in dealings with the larger community, and worked as intermediaries in differences of opinion or conflicts. Decisions were made by male members of the organization. Sometimes, a women's organization (*fujinkai*) was attached to this organization. Many of these organizations died with the World War II internment. Properties were signed over to the nisei, and records were lost or destroyed during this period. Today, only a few of the original organizations still exist and function.

As nisei children grew older, Japanese-language schools flourished throughout the state. The first Japanese-language school of record in the state was Shogakko in San Francisco, established in 1902. By the 1930s, virtually every Japanese American community had its own *nihongakko* (Japanese-language school) operated by a church or Japanese association. Some communities had two or more schools. Occasionally, both Buddhist and Christian churches in a community supported their own Japanese-language schools. Teachers were often church ministers, their wives, or well-educated persons in the community. Occasionally, a dormitory was built in conjunction with the Japanese-language school, as in Fresno, Guadalupe, and Sacramento, where children of busy parents would live at the school. Many of these schools closed with the incarceration of West Coast Japanese American residents during World War II. In many communities, however, a revival of Japanese-language schools occurred during the 1950s and 1960s, when the sansei generation became of school age. Currently, some communities still operate Japanese-language schools, but their numbers are small.



Shonien (left), Nishi Hongwanji Buddhist Church (right), Los Angeles County

Persons originating from the same area in Japan formed *kenjinkai*, which are social organizations designed to support, aid, and acquaint fellow *kenjin* (persons from the same prefecture). Social services in the form of financial aid, informal counseling, and care for the sick or injured were functions of these groups. Communities had one *kenjinkai* if the Japanese American community was primarily composed of people from the same area of Japan. If the community was large, as in Los Angeles, many *kenjinkai* existed, reflecting the different geographic origins of the immigrants. Very few exist today.

Particularly in agricultural areas, cooperatives to grow, ship, and market agricultural products emerged, giving issei farmers greater control over their economic destinies. Some of these cooperatives including Lucky Produce in Sacramento, Naturipe in Watsonville, the California Flower Market in San Francisco, and the City Market in Los Angeles are still operating today.

The Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) emerged as the largest nisei organization. Organized in 1930, with headquarters now in San Francisco, JACL gained prominence as an organization during the World War II internment, when issei leaders were separately detained and the War Relocation Authority refused to allow the immigrant generation leadership positions. With chapters throughout the country, JACL speaks for a certain segment of the Japanese American community.

Nisei also provided leadership in Christian and Buddhist churches. Due to an "integration" move in Christian churches, Japanese Christian Churches have removed the "Japanese" designation, and have adopted names that make it

difficult to identify them as ethnic churches. Many Japanese Americans now attend churches with non-Japanese congregations. Coupled with the fact that many Japanese Americans attend no church at all, it becomes difficult to evaluate religious preference. Of those that do belong to a church, their preference still remains either Christian or Buddhist.

Japanese American community organizations have been in existence since 1877, serving the changing needs of their members. A relatively recent phenomenon is senior citizens' centers, where programs geared to the needs and interests of issei are carried out by second- and third-generation Japanese Americans. Some of these include Kimochikai in San Francisco, the Pioneer Center in Los Angeles, the Nikkei Service Center in Fresno, the Suisun Nisei Club in Suisun City (Solano County), and the Asian Community Center in Sacramento.



Japan Town (left), Morning Star School (right), San Francisco County

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History



A History of Japanese Americans in California: DISCRIMINATORY PRACTICES

As with most people of color, Japanese Americans have suffered a variety of discriminatory practices, legislation, and restrictions. Perhaps this could have been expected considering the initial conditions under which Japanese were originally enticed to immigrate to the United States — as only a source of labor, with no plans for them to stay and participate actively in the life of the society.

Even as a source of labor, Japanese immigrants were criticized for being too numerous. They were seen as unassimilable and potentially capable of overrunning the state. The Asiatic Exclusion League, formed in May 1905, mounted a campaign to exclude Japanese and Koreans from the United States. Under pressure from the league, the San Francisco Board of Education ruled on October 11, 1906 that all Japanese and Korean students should join the Chinese at the segregated Oriental School that had been established in 1884. There were 93 Japanese students in the 23 San Francisco public schools at that time. Twenty-five of those students had been born in the United States.

To appease those Californians who were agitating for cessation of Japanese immigration without offending the Japanese government, President Theodore Roosevelt negotiated the 1907-08 Gentlemen's Agreement, whereby the Japanese government agreed not to issue passports to laborers immigrating to the United States. However, parents, wives, and children of laborers already in the United States could immigrate, as well as laborers who had already been here.

This agreement nevertheless stimulated the anti-Japanese movement. Rather than cutting off all immigration from Japan, the agreement resulted in a steady stream of Japanese women entering California. Soon thereafter, children were born, resulting in increases in the Japanese population, rather than decreases. Arranged marriage, sometimes with the exchange of photographs, was the accepted mode of contracting marriages in Japanese society. This practice allowed male issei immigrants to marry, and to send for their brides to join them in this country. The effect was to bolster the stereotyped image of Japanese as being sneaky and untrustworthy, even though the provisions of the Gentlemen's Agreement were being scrupulously maintained.

As the Japanese American population steadily increased, through immigration of picture brides and the birth of nisei children, anti-Japanese forces regrouped after World War I. Charges were made that the Japanese

birth rate was three times as high as the general population's. The fact that Japanese females in prime child-bearing years were compared with White women from 15 to 45 years of age was not mentioned. The unassimilability of Japanese was charged. As part of the Immigration Act of 1924, immigration from Japan was completely cut off for 28 years.

Beginning in January 1909 and continuing until after World War II, anti-Japanese bills were introduced into the California legislature every year. The first to become law was the Webb-Hartley Law (known more commonly as the Alien Land Law of 1913), which limited land leases by "aliens ineligible to citizenship" to three years, and barred further land purchases. Amendments to this law in 1919 and 1920 further restricted land leasing agreements. Although the law contains no mention of Asians by name, it is clear that "aliens ineligible to citizenship" included, among others, Japanese, a group without access to U.S. citizenship and the target of anti-Asian groups during this period.

The issue of U.S. citizenship eventually was decided by the 1922 Supreme Court decision of *Takao Ozawa v. United States*, which declared that Japanese were ineligible for U.S. citizenship. "Free white persons" were made eligible for U.S. citizenship by Congress in 1790. "Aliens of African nativity and persons of African descent" were similarly designated by Congress in 1870. Due to some ambiguity about the term "white," some 420 Japanese had been naturalized by 1910, but a ruling by a U.S. attorney general to stop issuing naturalization papers to Japanese ended the practice in 1906. Ozawa had filed his naturalization papers in 1914. In 1922, the U.S. Supreme Court judged that since Ozawa was neither a "free white person" nor an African by birth or descent, he did not have the right of naturalization as a Mongolian.

Influenced by the anti-Japanese movement, an amendment to the State Political Code in 1921 allowed establishment of separate schools for children of Indian, Chinese, Japanese, or Mongolian parentage. These children were not to be integrated into other public schools once separate schools were established. School districts in Sacramento County elected to maintain separate schools in the communities of Florin, Walnut Grove, Isleton, and Courtland. Chinese, Japanese, and Filipino children in these school districts attended segregated schools until World War II. In 1945, a Japanese American family challenged the constitutionality of segregated schools, and the Los Angeles County Superior Court concurred that segregation on the basis of race or ancestry violated the Fourteenth Amendment. The California legislature repealed the 1921 provision in 1947.

The most widely perpetrated discriminatory action toward West Coast Japanese Americans was the internment camp policy of World War II, which was set into motion by the signing of Executive Order 9066 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. The executive order did not mention Japanese Americans by name, but the designation of military areas and the decision to exclude certain persons from these areas was directed toward Japanese Americans. Thirteen temporary detention camps in California were hastily established to hold Japanese Americans until more permanent camps in remote sections of the country could be constructed.

After Executive Order 9066 was issued, the vast majority of public

proclamations emanating from Lt. General John DeWitt, Commander of the Western Defense Command, were directed toward controlling the movement and freedom of Japanese Americans. Similarly, the civilian exclusion orders, issued by DeWitt, directed Japanese Americans along the West Coast to report for detention at designated times and places.

Incarceration policy was challenged by Gordon Hirabayashi, who violated curfew regulations in the state of Washington; Fred Korematsu of Oakland, who was prosecuted for knowingly remaining in an area forbidden by military orders; Minoru Yasui, who was prosecuted for violation of curfew orders as a test case; and Mitsuye Endo of Sacramento, who claimed unlawful detention. None of the judgments that resulted from these cases dealt directly with the constitutionality of incarcerating more than 120,000 Japanese Americans. But *Ex parte Endo*, issued December 16, 1944, did result in the rescinding of exclusion orders, effective January 2, 1945, which eventually closed the 10 concentration camps in the United States.

During the internment years, several legislative actions affected thousands of Japanese Americans. A California statute of 1943, amended in 1945, prohibited "aliens ineligible to citizenship" from earning their living as commercial fishermen in coastal waters. Torao Takahashi brought suit, and after a tortuous sequence of events, including a U.S. Supreme Court ruling that the statute was unconstitutional, resident alien Japanese fishermen were again allowed to fish the waters off the California coast in 1948.

In 1944, a federal statute amended the Nationality Act of 1940 to permit U.S. citizens to renounce citizenship during wartime. The Department of Justice intended that leaders of disturbances at the Tule Lake Segregation Center renounce their citizenship, therefore making themselves eligible for further detention when the camps were dismantled. Instead, 5,522 renunciations came from Japanese Americans (5,371 were from persons confined at Tule Lake), rather than the several hundred expected from pro-Japan elements. When the concentration camps were closed, many internees regretted renouncing their U.S. citizenship, citing coercion, intimidation, and fears of hostility by the dominant society. Lawsuits to revalidate citizenship continued until 1965, including *Abo v. Clark* (77 F. Supp. 806), which returned U.S. citizenship to 4,315 nisei.

During World War II, while Japanese and Japanese Americans were unable to defend themselves in court, California's Attorney General was allocated additional funds to prosecute violations of the Alien Land Law of 1913. A total of 79 cases were prosecuted, including 59 after the war. The first challenge to the Alien Land Law was *Harada v. State of California*, in which the Superior Court of Riverside County declared in 1918 that Jukichi Harada could purchase property in the name of his children, who were U.S. citizens though still minors. Subsequent court cases in other jurisdictions had differing results, some ruling that minor children could not own property.

Two escheat cases had particular significance in invalidating the Alien Land Law. The case of *Oyama v. State of California* in 1948 determined that non-citizen parents could purchase land as gifts for citizen children. The *Fujii v. State of California* case in 1952 resulted in the Alien Land Law of 1913 being declared unconstitutional. Legal obstacles to land purchases by Asians were thus removed.

To provide partial restitution for losses and damages resulting from the internment, an Evacuation Claims Act was passed by Congress. While losses by Japanese Americans were conservatively estimated to be around \$400,000,000, only 10 percent of this amount was disbursed to former internees. The issue remains alive today in 1981, with the establishment of a Congressional Commission to investigate the historical, legal, economical, and psychological impacts of the forced internment of over 120,000 persons of Japanese ancestry during World War II.

Japanese Americans have also endured informal discriminatory practices. Shopping, dining, and recreational activities at some business establishments were denied to Japanese Americans in previous years. Restrictive covenants in housing affected where they lived. When deceased members of the highly decorated 442nd Combat team were returned to the United States after World War II, some cemeteries refused to allow them gravesites because of their ancestry. In the past, some occupations have been closed to Japanese Americans, yet others such as gardening have been considered particularly suitable for their temperament, skills, and social standing in the society. Outward manifestations of discriminatory practices toward Japanese Americans can be subtle, but are still very much in existence as recent legal cases involving discrimination in employment promotion indicate.



St. Andrews Methodist Church, Kern County [circa 1929]

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A History of Japanese Americans in California: INCARCERATION OF JAPANESE AMERICANS DURING WORLD WAR II

Temporary detention camps called Assembly Centers represented an early phase of the mass incarceration of 92,785 Californians of Japanese ancestry during World War II.

Japanese Americans were held at these temporary detention camps for two to seven months until they were transferred to one of the permanent concentration camps. An entire population of loyal and productive Californians was eliminated from the public scene.

The incarceration of Japanese Americans had a profound effect on the military, political, and economic affairs of the state at the time, and the episode remains a major blot on the history of American law. United States citizens and lawful permanent residents were imprisoned without charges, without evidence, without trial, and in violation of every basic constitutional right.

In the years preceding World War II, racist discrimination against Asian Americans was a fact of life on the West Coast. Discrimination in housing, employment, education, public accommodations, and social relations was pervasive. Moreover, the media constantly reinforced negative stereotypes: newspapers, radio, movies, comic strips, and pulp novels inundated the public with lurid tales of Japanese spies and saboteurs. This historical background is indispensable for an understanding of what happened to Japanese Americans during the war years.

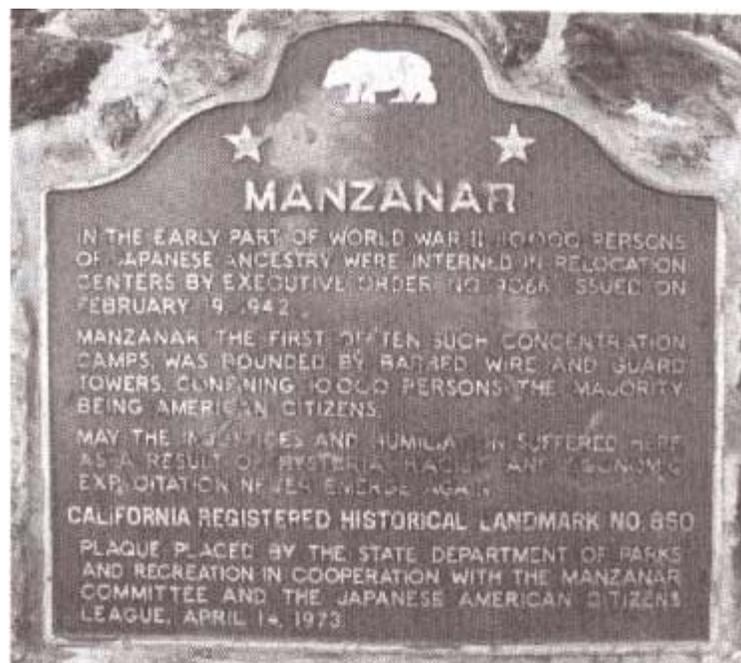
Japan had been waging war in Asia since 1937, and United States relations with Japan had steadily worsened. With the expectation of war, the U.S. Government undertook precautionary measures. In October 1941, the State Department ordered a covert investigation of Japanese American communities on the West Coast and Hawaii. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the military intelligence services intensified secret surveillance programs which had been in existence for several years. All of these intelligence reports certified that the Japanese American population as a whole posed no threat to national security.

When global war finally came to the United States on December 7, 1941, the government was well prepared to handle domestic security. Using previously prepared lists, the FBI summarily arrested over 2,000 Japanese nationals during the first few days of the war. No criminal charges were ever filed against these individuals. They were considered suspicious simply because

of their leadership positions in the Japanese American community. Organization officers, Buddhist and Shinto priests, newspaper editors, language and martial arts instructors were all imprisoned at one of 26 internment camps operated by the Justice Department. Dependents were left without a source of livelihood, and the Japanese American community was stripped of its established leadership.

Like the previous immigration campaigns, California politicians and pressure groups lobbied the federal government to remove or lock up all Japanese Americans. Even though Attorney General Francis Biddle and FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover advised against it, President Franklin D. Roosevelt authorized the mass expulsion and incarceration of Japanese Americans by signing Executive Order 9066 on February 19, 1942. The order itself was carefully worded to avoid constitutional challenges. It did not single out a specific group, nor did it say people were to be locked up. But there was a common understanding that Executive Order 9066 was designed primarily for the purpose of removing and imprisoning Japanese Americans. With no public demand for locking up German Americans or Italian Americans, the government chose to forego the theoretical option of incarcerating descendants of the European enemy nations as well. On February 20, Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson designated Lt. General John L. DeWitt, head of the Western Defense Command, to carry out the intent of Executive Order 9066.

The first action under authority of Executive Order 9066 was the expulsion of the entire Japanese American community from Terminal Island (San Pedro Bay, Los Angeles County) on February 25-27. Armed soldiers marched into the old fishing village and ordered every person of Japanese ancestry, including native-born Americans, to leave their homes within 48 hours. The majority of Terminal Island residents were United States citizens, but they were evicted without legal recourse of any kind. The eviction was especially harsh because most of the men had been arrested earlier by the FBI and the move had to be made almost entirely by women and children. The government made no provisions for alternative housing, and some 2,000 Japanese Americans became displaced persons.



Manzanar Camp, Inyo County

On March 2, DeWitt declared the western halves of California, Oregon, and Washington plus the southern half of Arizona as "Military Area #1," and announced his intention to remove every person of Japanese ancestry therefrom. Japanese Americans were urged to "voluntarily" give up their homes and jobs before they were forcibly expelled by the army. A total of 10,312 Japanese Americans hurriedly left the proscribed areas, with 4,310 moving to the eastern side of California, which was then a "free zone."

On March 11, DeWitt created the Wartime Civil Control Administration (WCCA) as a sub-unit of the Western Defense Command and appointed Colonel Karl R. Bendetsen as the military director responsible for implementation of the expulsion and detention program. In the meantime, Congress passed Public Law 77-503 on March 21 which made it a federal offense for a civilian to disobey a military order issued under authority of Executive Order 9066.

On March 24, all Japanese Americans on Bainbridge Island, Washington were ordered to report for imprisonment under "Civilian Exclusion Order #1." Subsequently, "Civilian Exclusion Order #2" issued on March 30 applied to the Long Beach-San Pedro area in California. Eventually, 108 separate "Civilian Exclusion Orders" were issued, each applying to a different locale in Arizona, California, Oregon, and Washington. Japanese Americans were directed to bring only what they could carry in their hands and turn themselves in at a "Civil Control Station" near their homes. Upon reporting, they were registered, numbered, tagged with shipping labels, and placed aboard buses, trains, and trucks under armed guard for transportation to one of the 15 Temporary Detention Camps. From that point on, Japanese Americans became prisoners of their own country. On arrival at the camps, they were forced to submit to body and baggage searches, fingerprinting, and long interrogations about their background.

Japanese Americans were imprisoned on the basis of ancestry alone. There was no evidence they had done anything illegal or were dangerous in any

way. Native-born Americans were locked up without charges or trial and in complete disregard for their constitutional rights.

DeWitt gave the rationale of "military necessity" to protect the West Coast against sabotage in case of invasion, but such a claim was contrary to the actual U.S. Army "estimate of the situation" which concluded that an invasion of the West Coast was extremely unlikely. The claim was also inconsistent with the fact that Japanese Americans in Hawaii were not similarly incarcerated en masse. Hawaii was the site of the Pearl Harbor attack, some 3,000 miles closer to the enemy, and in far greater danger of invasion. There were 159,534 Japanese Americans in Hawaii, comprising 34.2% of the population, but Lt. General Delos Emmons, the military commander in Hawaii, decided that "military necessity" there required the Japanese Americans to remain free and help in the war effort.

The "military necessity" excuse was further contradicted by the fact that babies, children, bedridden old people, blind or paralyzed persons — people incapable of committing acts of sabotage or espionage — were also incarcerated. Even orphans in institutions and children adopted by White families were imprisoned if they had any Japanese ancestry at all.

By March 24, all Japanese Americans were placed on a dusk to-dawn curfew. On March 27, DeWitt abruptly prohibited any further "voluntary" movement of Japanese Americans away from "Military Area #1." Japanese Americans were "frozen" in their homes until arrangements could be made for their incarceration. They were trapped with no option aside from imprisonment. DeWitt methodically issued detention orders almost daily, and an average of 3,750 persons a day were forced out of their homes and locked up in the Temporary Detention Camps.

In a corollary act, the California State Personnel Board summarily fired all State employees of Japanese ancestry on April 2. Blanket dismissal charges were filed against anyone with a Japanese surname. Those who had taken leaves of absence to enter the Temporary Detention Camps were dismissed in absentia, while those who were still free were ordered to promptly vacate their jobs.

On June 2, DeWitt proclaimed the eastern half of California as "Military Area #2" and prohibited Japanese Americans from leaving that area as well until they, too, could be ordered to report for detention. By this action, DeWitt betrayed an earlier promise to spare those who moved to the eastern half of California during the "voluntary" period. Significantly, only the eastern half of California was proscribed: the eastern halves of Oregon and Washington were left alone. This discrepancy was due to the continued political pressure in California to eliminate Japanese Americans from the entire state.

About this time, an important turning point in the Pacific War occurred. The U.S. Navy annihilated the core of the Japanese Navy at the Battle of Midway on June 3-6. From that point on, Japan totally lacked the capability to attack the West Coast. The U.S. government and military knew that any danger of invasion had vanished. However, instead of cancelling the detention program and saving millions in funds, war materiel, and personnel, the government continued to build new concentration camps and lock up

more Japanese Americans.

The detention process progressed from district to district, county to county, over a five month period. By June 6, all Japanese Americans in the western half of the West Coast states had been locked up. By August 7, 1942, the entire process was completed. A total of 92,785 Californians, and an overall total of 120,313 Japanese Americans ended up in government custody.

Horse racetracks, fairgrounds, rodeo grounds, and labor camps were used as sites for the temporary detention camps. The WCCA/Western Defense Command expropriated 13 such locations in California and hurriedly converted them into transient detention facilities. Existing horsestalls and grandstands were used for living quarters, and flimsy tarpaper barracks were built for additional housing. Compounds were surrounded by high barbed-wire fences and guard towers; sentries in towers were armed with machine guns; soldiers with bayonet-tipped rifles patrolled camp perimeters; and searchlights crisscrossed camp interiors at night.



Entrance to Manzanar Camp, Inyo County

Detainees made the following observations:

Estelle Ishigo (Pomona):

The first sight of the barbed wire enclosure with armed soldiers standing guard as our bus slowly turned in through the gate stunned us. . . . Here was a camp of sheds, enclosed within a high barbed wire fence, with guard towers and soldiers with machine guns.

Charles Kikuchi (Tanforan):

I saw a soldier in a tall guardhouse near the barbed wire fence and did not like it because it reminds me of a concentration camp.

Mine Okubo (Tanforan):

We were close to freedom and yet far from it. The San Bruno streetcar line bordered the camp on the east and the main state highway on the south. Streams of cars passed by all day. Guard towers and barbed wire surrounded the entire center. Guards were on duty night and day.

The fence and guards were not there to "protect" the Japanese Americans; the barbed wire tops were turned inward, and the guards had their weapons trained into the camp. DeWitt, himself, explained the purpose of the security measures:

The Assembly Centers in the combat area are generally located in grounds surrounded by fences clearly defining the limits for the evacuees. In such places the perimeter of the camp will be guarded to prevent unauthorized departure of evacuees Should an evacuee attempt to leave camp without permission he will be halted, arrested, and delivered to camp police.

The camp interiors were arranged like prisoner of war camps or overseas military camps, and were completely unsuited for family living. Barracks and horsestalls were divided into blocks and each block had a central mess hall, latrine, showers, wash basins, and laundry tubs. Toilets, showers, and bedrooms were unpartitioned; there was no water or plumbing in the living quarters; and anyone going to the lavatory at night was followed by a searchlight. Eight-person families were placed in 20-x-20-foot rooms, six-person families in 12-x-20-foot rooms, and four-person families in 8-x-20-foot rooms. Smaller families and single persons had to share unpartitioned units with strangers. Each detainee received a straw mattress, an army blanket, and not much else. Privacy was non-existent. Everything had to be done communally. Endless queues formed for eating, washing, and personal needs. Sanitation and food quality were poor. Outbreaks of diarrhea and communicable diseases were common, and the stench in the horsestall areas was overwhelming.

While Japanese Americans were being confined in temporary detention camps, the War Department built 10 large concentration camps — each designed to hold an average of 12,000 prisoners — in the interior desert and swamp regions of the United States. Two of these concentration camps were located in California, while the other eight were in the states of Arizona (two), Arkansas (two), Colorado, Idaho, Utah, and Wyoming.

Beginning on May 26 and continuing through October 30, approximately 500 detainees per day were taken from the temporary detention camps and placed aboard trains under armed guard for transfer to one of the 10 permanent camps. The movement required the use of 171 special trains — at a time when railroads were critically needed to transport military supplies.

Two of the permanent camps were located in California. In Southern California, the **Manzanar War Relocation Center**, located between Independence and Lone Pine in Inyo County originally as a temporary detention center, was the first center, established on March 21, 1942. On March 21-22, 1942, the first large contingent of Japanese Americans was relocated from Los Angeles to the Manzanar Assembly Center. Three months later, however, Manzanar was transferred to the War Relocation Authority (WRA) for use as one of 10 permanent centers. Manzanar's total land area included 6,000 acres in the Owens Valley with a living area of 620 acres. The living area consisted of 36 blocks. Each block contained 16 barracks, a central mess hall, laundry, and bath houses. The barracks were built of wooden planks nailed to studs and covered with tar paper. In some places the green wood warped, resulting in cracks in floors and walls.

Congressman Leland Ford of California, who advocated that "all Japanese, whether citizens or not, be placed in inland concentration camps," observed that "on dusty days, one might just as well be outside as inside" at Manzanar.

Two rock entrance stations, a solitary high school auditorium, and an obelisk cemetery monument are the only extant features of the Manzanar landscape, interspersed with concrete barracks foundations, remains of tea gardens, cemetery grave sites, and mess hall debris. To many Japanese Americans, Manzanar "recreates for them that moment in their lives when all the world was enclosed within this one-mile square." Manzanar housed over 10,000 internees before the camp closed on November 21, 1945.

In Northern California, the **Tule Lake Relocation Camp**, located six miles south of the California-Oregon border, occupied 7,400 acres of land in the dry lake bed of the Klamath Falls Basin, Modoc County. Most of the land was devoted to agricultural activities while approximately 1-1/4 square miles represented the residential area surrounded by barbed wire fence and guard towers.

Within the enclosure were 64 blocks; nine blocks in turn were usually arranged to form a ward. Each block, measuring approximately 500 feet to a side, was repetitively organized around a core of 14 precisely located 20 x 100-foot-long barracks. Each barracks was divided into four to six apartment units. The barracks were designed to accommodate a total of 250 individuals per block. Tule Lake became the largest single camp with a population of over 18,000.

On May 26, 1942, the first evacuees arrived at Tule Lake from the assembly centers at Portland, Oregon, and Puyallup, Washington. Tule Lake began as just one of the 10 camps. By 1943, however, the War Relocation Authority (WRA) and the U.S. Army initiated a registration program requiring all adult evacuees to respond to a loyalty questionnaire to determine leave clearance for service in the U.S. Armed Forces and for resettlement outside of the restricted zones.

In July 1943, Tule Lake was designated as the segregation center for accommodating a diverse population of evacuees who wished to be repatriated to Japan or who replied in the negative to Questions 27 and 28 of the questionnaire. Because of the program of segregation instituted at Tule Lake, its history was marked by disturbances and human tragedies at a level of intensity greater than that experienced in the other centers.

The last internee left Tule Lake on March 20, 1946, the last of the 10 centers to close. Today, a California State Historical Landmark plaque and monument identifies the camp site, where some of the original barracks buildings have been converted into contemporary housing facilities. Farm labor housing, airport terminals and runways, as well as an elementary school now occupy portions of the land that once was the home of 18,000 Japanese Americans.



Tule Lake Camp, Modoc County [circa 1945]

Temporary Detention Camps in California, 1942

<i>Name</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>County</i>	<i>Previous Use</i>
1. Fresno	Fresno	Fresno	Fairgrounds
2. Arboga	Marysville	Yuba	Labor Camp
3. Merced	Merced	Merced	Fairgrounds
4. Pinedale	Pinedale	Fresno	Labor Camp
5. Pomona	Pomona	Los Angeles	Fairgrounds
6. Walerga	Sacramento	Sacramento	Labor Camp
7. Salinas	Salinas	Monterey	Rodeo Grounds
8. Santa Anita	Arcadia	Los Angeles	Horse Racetrack
9. Stockton	Stockton	San Joaquin	Fairgrounds
10. Tanforan	San Bruno	San Mateo	Horse Racetrack
11. Tulare	Tulare	Tulare	Fairgrounds
12. Turlock	Turlock	Stanislaus	Fairgrounds
13. Manaznar	Owens Valley	Inyo	Aqueduct Land

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A History of Japanese Americans in California: HISTORIC SITES

Underlined sites are links to more detailed reports.

1. **Alameda Buddhist Temple**, Alameda County
 2. **Alvarado Japanese Association Building**, Alameda County
 3. **Angel Island Detention Barracks**, Marin County
 4. **Arroyo Grande Japanese School**, San Luis Obispo County
 5. **Asahi Market**, Ventura County
 6. **Bacon Island**, San Joaquin County
 7. **Bakersfield Buddhist Church**, Kern County
 8. **Bakersfield Japanese Methodist Church**, Kern County
 9. **Biggs Rice Experiment Station**, Butte County
 10. **Bowles**, Fresno County
-
11. **California Flower Market, Inc.**, San Francisco
 12. **Centerville Japanese Language School**, Alameda County
 13. **City Market**, Los Angeles County
 14. **Colma Japanese Cemetery**, San Mateo County
 15. **Concord Nippongo Gakko**, Contra Costa County
 16. **Courtland Bates Oriental School Site**, Sacramento County
 17. **Delano Nihonmachi**, Kern County
 18. **Durst Ranch Site**, Yuba County
 19. **Enmanji**, Sonoma County
 20. **Euclid Hall**, Alameda County
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21. **Florin Buddhist Church**, Sacramento County
 22. **Florin East Grammar School**, Sacramento County
 23. **Fountain Grove**, Sonoma County
 24. **Fresno Buddhist Church**, Fresno County
 25. **Fresno Nihonmachi**, Fresno County
 26. **Fukui Mortuary**, Los Angeles County
 27. **Gardena Valley Japanese Community Center**, Los Angeles County
 28. **George Shima's Office**, San Joaquin County
 29. **Gilroy Japanese Community Hall**, Santa Clara County
 30. **Gilroy Japanese Language School**, Santa Clara County
-
31. **Gospel Society/Fukuin Kai Site**, San Francisco
 32. **Guadalupe Buddhist Church**, Santa Barbara County
 33. **H. Sumida Company**, Fresno County
 34. **Harada House**, Riverside County
 35. **Harbor District Japanese Community Center**, Los Angeles County

36. **Hompa Hongwanji Buddhist Temple**, Los Angeles County
37. **Iseki Labor Camp**, Fresno County
38. **Isleton Oriental School Site**, Sacramento County
39. **Ivanhoe Gakuen**, Tulare County
40. **Iwata Store Site**, Stanislaus County

41. **Japanese American News Building**, San Francisco
42. **Japanese Salvation Army Building**, San Francisco
43. **Japanese Union Church of Los Angeles**, Los Angeles County
44. **K. Shinoda**, Tulare County
45. **Kamikawa Brothers**, Fresno County
46. **Kawasaki Labor Camp, Sierra Vista Ranch**, Tulare County
47. **Kimochi**, San Francisco
48. **Kings Hand Laundry**, Kings County
49. **Kinmon Gakuen**, San Francisco
50. **Kuwabara Hospital**, Santa Clara County

51. **Leslie Salt Company**, Alameda County
52. **Little Tokyo**, Los Angeles County
53. **Manzanar**, Inyo County
54. **Marysville Nihonmachi**, Yuba County
55. **Miyajima Hotel**, San Joaquin County
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57. **Morioka's Orange Processing Shed**, Tulare County
58. **Morning Star School**, San Francisco
59. **Naturipe**, Santa Cruz County
60. **Nihon Byoin-Hashiba Sanitarium**, Fresno County

61. **Nippon Hospital**, San Joaquin County
62. **Okonogi Hospital Site**, Fresno County
63. **Orange County Civic Center Plaza Japanese Garden**, Orange County
64. **Oxnard Buddhist Church**, Ventura County
65. **Oxnard Japanese Cemetery**, Ventura County
66. **Oyama Property**, San Diego County
67. **Point Lobos Canning Company Site**, Monterey County
68. **Reedley Kyogi-Kai Hall**, Fresno County
69. **Richmond Japanese Camp**, Contra Costa County
70. **Rockville School House**, Solano County

71. **Sacramento Parkview Presbyterian Church**, Sacramento County
72. **Sacramento Produce Company**, Sacramento County
73. **San Diego Buddhist Temple**, San Diego County
74. **San Francisco Japan Town/Nihonmachi**, San Francisco
75. **San Francisco Japanese YMCA**, San Francisco
76. **San Jose Japanese Methodist Episcopal Church**, Santa Clara County
77. **San Jose Japanese Theatre**, Santa Clara County
78. **San Jose Midwifery**, Santa Clara County
79. **San Jose Nihonmachi**, Santa Clara County
80. **San Luis Obispo Japanese Town**, San Luis Obispo County

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82. **Selma Japanese Mission Church**, Fresno County
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84. **Sierra Madre Gakuen**, Los Angeles County

85. **Southeast Japanese Community Center**, Los Angeles County
 86. **Southern California Flower Market**, Los Angeles County
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91. **Turlock Social Hall**, Stanislaus County
 92. **U.S. Kaneko Family Plot**, Riverside County
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 94. **Visalia Nihonmachi**, Tulare County
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 96. **Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony Site**, El Dorado County
 97. **Walnut Grove**, Sacramento County
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 99. **[Walnut Grove Oriental School Site](#)**, Sacramento County
 100. **Watsonville Japanese Town**, Santa Cruz County
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101. **[White Point](#)**, Los Angeles County
 102. **Yamato Cemetery**, Monterey County
 103. **[Yamato Colony](#)**, Merced County
 104. **Yamato Hall/Tokyo Club Site**, Los Angeles County
 105. **Yamaguchi Labor Camp**, Tulare County
-

HISTORIC SITE OVERVIEWS

In several parts of California, entire communities of Japanese emerged. These communities focused on a common economic pursuit, generally agriculture or fishing. Some communities, such as [Bowles](#) and [Yamato Colony](#), did not have the usual businesses or commercial activities of nihonmachi. Community members therefore had to travel to other nihonmachi, or do business with White merchants in nearby towns. These communities have similarities, but each is unique in some respects.

Facilities for Children

Several institutions emerged in the Japanese community expressly to meet the needs of children. By the 1930s, Japanese-language schools could be found in almost any community in California where Japanese lived. Often, they were operated through churches or the Japanese Association. A revival of Japanese language schools occurred during the 1950s and 1960s, and a few survive today. One of these is the [Concord Nippongo Cakko](#) in Contra Costa County.

Facilities providing care for children who were orphaned, or whose parents could not otherwise provide for them, also emerged. One of these was the [Shonien](#) in Los Angeles.

Labor

A need by agricultural interests for laborers in Hawaii and on the American mainland provided the impetus for early Japanese immigration to the United

States. Recruitment and enticement resulted in large numbers of immigrants from Japan in the early part of the 20th century.

Once in the United States, immigrants traveled throughout California, working in various occupations — agriculture, fishing, land reclamation, domestic services, commercial enterprises, railroads, and oil fields. Many of the earliest immigrants proceeded to establish their own businesses, farms, cooperatives, and other enterprises. A large minority of these single men, however, continued to work as laborers, and constituted the backbone of agricultural workers through the mid-1900s, along with Chicanos and Filipinos.

Churches

Churches, both Buddhist and Christian, were the centers of Japanese communities for many years. They provided not only religious services but also social activities, athletic organizations, and Japanese language classes for the community. Churches were established in almost every Japanese community in the state. Two are included as examples. The [Buddhist Church of Bakersfield](#) is the oldest Japanese Buddhist church building constructed by its congregation still used for religious services. The [Union Church](#) of Los Angeles played a particularly significant role for the Japanese community of Southern California.

Health Care

Facilities to provide health care became a priority for Japanese Americans in the first two decades of the twentieth century. Babies were being born, occasional epidemics affected large segments of the community, and the working and living conditions of the times required midwives, doctors, and nurses. In addition, medical practitioners needed structures where they could provide medical service.

Japanese hospitals were constructed in several locations where large numbers of issei settled. The Okonogi Byoin in the City of Fresno was probably the first Japanese hospital in the state. Established by Dr. Bunkuro Okonogi, the Okonogi Byoin was in operation by about 1901, and grew progressively larger and more modern until Dr. Okonogi's death in 1950. The San Jose Kumamoto Kenjinkai organized its community hospital, Kuwabara Hospital, in 1910; the structure is still used by the community today. The Nihon Byoin in Fresno was organized around 1913, and currently houses several businesses. The [Nippon Hospital](#) in Stockton was established in 1919.

Recreation

Little is written about recreational facilities and opportunities for Japanese immigrants. Because of the responsibilities of work, family, and community priorities, relatively small amounts of time were spent in recreational pursuits. Recitals, plays, singing, and special programs were often performed at churches and community centers. Casual recreational activities included pool, baseball, and gambling. The [San Jose Japanese Theater](#) and [White Point](#) were developed specifically as recreational sites for the Japanese community.

Discriminatory Practices

Japanese Americans have suffered discriminatory practices resulting from official legislative actions such as the Alien Land Laws, and from informal regulations such as restrictive housing covenants. The most publicized discriminatory action was internment of approximately 120,000 West Coast Japanese Americans in [concentration camps](#) during World War II.

Alien Land Law

From 1909 onward, the California legislature considered bills designed to control leasing and ownership of land by Asians. These laws were directed toward Japanese, the primary "aliens ineligible for U.S. citizenship" who were buying property at this time. Agricultural interests wanted to maintain them as a labor force. White supremacist and patriotic groups were determined to prevent nonwhite groups from becoming permanent and participating members of California society.

On May 19, 1913, Governor Hiram Johnson signed the Webb-Hartley Law (more popularly known as the Alien Land Law of 1913). It prevented "aliens ineligible to citizenship" from owning or acquiring land, and placed limitations on leasing and collective ownership of property. The laws of 1919 and 1920 more stringently restricted ownership and leasing of land. Although the California Supreme Court declared the Alien Land Law unconstitutional in 1952, the legislation remained on the books until November 4, 1956 when California voters repealed the law.

The following examples are just three of the many cases in which Japanese Americans incurred legal fees and harassment by government officials as a result of being prosecuted for violations of the Alien Land Law.

- [Harada House](#)
- [Oyama Property](#)
- [Sei Fujii Property](#)

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A History of Mexican Americans in California: INTRODUCTION

In 1846, the United States invaded and conquered California, then part of the Republic of Mexico. This event, one aspect of the 1846-1848 U.S.-Mexican War, led to U.S. annexation of California through the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Mexican American history in California had begun.

But if the Mexican American era in California was new, the roots of the Chicano¹ experience stretched back some three centuries to 1519 when Spaniards and their Indian allies carried out the conquest of the Aztec Empire in central Mexico and established what they called "New Spain." Exploration and colonization spread from Mexico City in all directions. This eventually included settlements throughout the northern frontier in the areas now occupied by the states of Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, and of course, California.

Hispanic settlement of what is now California began in 1769 when the Presidio and Catholic mission of San Diego were established. By 1823, 20 more missions dotted the California coast from San Diego to Sonoma, along with several military presidios and civilian communities. With few exceptions, the settlers and their descendants stayed close to the coast. There were few extensions into the California interior.

The California economy was based on agriculture and livestock. In contrast to central New Spain, coastal colonists found little mineral wealth. Some became farmers or ranchers, working for themselves on their own land or for other colonists. Government officials, priests, soldiers, and artisans settled in towns, missions, and presidios.

Socially, a combination class-caste system developed, although it lacked the rigidity of that in central New Spain. Most residents belonged to the lower and lower-middle classes, but some colonists arrived with or attained upper-class status, mainly through ranching or the acquisition of land grants. They reflected varied backgrounds — *peninsular* (born in Spain), *criollo* (born in New Spain of pure Spanish ancestry), Indian, Black, *mestizo* (of Spanish and Indian ancestry), *mulato* (of Spanish and African ancestry), and *zambo* (of Indian and African ancestry). Most colonists were of mixed racial backgrounds, and the process of *mestizaje* (racial mixture) continued in California, including mixture with various California Indian civilizations. Many mestizos strove, sometimes successfully, to become identified as pure-blooded Spaniards because racial identity affected socio-economic mobility. Whites generally held major government positions, church offices, and private

lands, while mestizos and Indians were concentrated at lower levels of the social structure. However, many people with mixed blood did succeed in becoming ranch owners and leading Californios, which sometimes brought an accompanying change of ethnic identity.

For the most part, Spanish California developed in relative isolation despite nominal central government control through appointed officials. When Mexico won its independence from Spain in 1821, central government control was even further diminished. In particular, Mexican independence opened the California door to trade with other countries, especially the United States. In the early 1820s, Anglo-Americans² developed an intensive trade with California via sailing ships around Cape Horn. The Old Spanish Trail, established in 1829 to link Los Angeles and Santa Fe, New Mexico, became the first major northern Mexican interprovincial trade route. Moreover, it linked California to the Santa Fe Trail between New Mexico and the United States.

Trade with the United States began the process of economic detachment of California and New Mexico from central Mexico. Ships brought hides and tallow from California in exchange for manufactured goods from both the United States and England. Increased trade led to increased demand for consumer goods, and therefore, greater dependence on the United States as the primary source of supply. Along with a burgeoning economy, California also experienced periodic revolutions, as large landowners vied for political supremacy, and the Mexican government made intermittent, sometimes unpopular, efforts to tighten the reins

One of the most dramatic and significant events of the Mexican period occurred in 1833, when the Mexican government secularized the missions. This meant that vast mission landholdings were taken over by the government, which in turn awarded them as land grants to Californios. Soon huge sprawling ranchos became the basic socio-economic units of the province. While upward mobility remained difficult, some Mexicans succeeded in making the transition into the California elite, particularly with the help of these land grants.

During the 1821-1846 period, Anglo-Americans began to settle in California. Many of these settlers, particularly those who had come by ship, eventually married Mexican women (usually of the local aristocracy), became Mexican citizens, and obtained land grants. In contrast, Anglo overland pioneers who settled in the Sacramento Valley of northern California brought their families, stayed to themselves, and resisted integration into Mexican society. It was this group that ultimately rebelled in 1846 against its Mexican hosts and formed the short-lived secessionist Bear Flag Republic, which disappeared during the U.S. conquest of California.

¹ *Chicano*: a term for Mexican Americans or U.S. residents of Mexican descent. - Ed.

² *Anglo-American*: a term sometimes used to describe non-Hispanic White residents of the U.S. (informally, "Anglo"). - Ed.



Agua Mansa Cemetery, Colton, San Bernardino County

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A History of Mexican Americans in California: THE MEXICAN WAR

In 1846, the U.S.-Mexican War erupted. Tensions between the two countries had been developing for years over the obvious U.S. goal of expanding to the Pacific coast. The United States had made several offers to purchase all or part of northern Mexico, offers that Mexico rejected. In 1842, the United States revealed that it was prepared to use force to take what money could not buy, when the commander of the Pacific squadron invaded and captured Monterey, the capital of California, and returned it with apologies.

On the other side, Mexico's antagonism toward the United States was exacerbated by annexation of Texas, a former Mexican province that had revolted in 1835. The Texas rebels had extracted a battlefield treaty from Mexico recognizing the independence of Texas, but the Mexican government had never ratified it. To Mexico, therefore, U.S. annexation of Texas was grand theft and unconscionable aggression.

The precipitating incident of the war came in April 1846, when small units of Mexican and U.S. soldiers clashed in disputed territory between the Nueces River (the Texas boundary recognized by Mexico) and the Rio Grande (the boundary claimed by Texas). The incident provided a pretext for an annexation decision already made by U.S. President James K. Polk, who ordered invasion by U.S. troops. Fighting in northeastern Mexico was followed by the landing of U.S. forces at Veracruz and an advance overland from there to Mexico City. Simultaneously, other U.S. forces occupied the province of New Mexico and then marched to California, most of which had already come under U.S. control as the result of a naval invasion and the Bear Flag Revolt.

The initial U.S. occupation of California occurred without bloodshed, but Mexican armed reaction ultimately broke out in both New Mexico and California. Mexican patriots, mainly citizen volunteers, were victorious in 1846 in battles at Los Angeles, San Pasqual, Chino Rancho, and elsewhere. But eventually they had to submit to the trained and better-armed U.S. forces. By early 1847, the United States had established control over California and the rest of northern Mexico, and proceeded to absorb this territory. The 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo between the United States and Mexico confirmed the land transfer.

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A History of Mexican Americans in California: POST-CONQUEST CALIFORNIA

No sooner had the treaty been signed than the first major post-war influx of Anglos began, fueled by the discovery of gold in 1848. The 10,000 Californios (pre-conquest Mexican Californians) soon found the territory swamped by Anglo-American migrants and foreign immigrants. The latter included Chileans, Peruvians, Basques, and Mexicans, particularly miners from the Mexican province of Sonora. However, despite this Latino immigration, the Spanish-speaking population of California fell to 15 percent by 1850, and to four percent by 1870.

Northern California received the major thrust of the Anglo gold rush migration, while southern California remained heavily Mexican. This ethnic contrast was one factor in the debate over the possibility of dividing California into two states, as happened in the case of New Mexico and Arizona. However, the coming of the transcontinental railroad to southern California in the 1870s spurred a land boom and the state's second major population explosion. By the 1880s, Anglo settlers were also numerically dominant in the southern part of the state.

The presence of a Mexican majority in 1848 contributed to a promising start for good ethnic relations in California. Californios participated widely in the early post-conquest government, and provided eight of the 48 delegates to the 1849 state constitutional convention. There they won such transitory victories as a provision that all state laws and regulations be translated into Spanish. In southern California, where Californios remained a majority in some places until the 1880s, they continued to be elected to local and county positions, and a handful held state offices or seats in the legislature.

However, the rapid establishment of a heavy statewide Anglo majority quickly rendered Mexican Americans politically powerless at the state level. As a result, they could not prevent enactment of inequitable and sometimes discriminatory laws. For example, the legislature placed the heaviest tax burden on land, an abrupt and decimating shift from the Mexican system of taxing production rather than land. Although this tax also hurt Anglo landowners, it seriously undermined the Californio economic position, based primarily on ranching. The Foreign Miners' Tax of 1850, a \$20 monthly fee for the right to mine, was applied not only to foreign immigrants but also to California-born Mexicans, who had automatically become U.S. citizens under the terms of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. The state anti-vagrancy act of 1855 was so obviously anti-Mexican that it became known popularly as the Greaser Law. Possibly the most blatantly anti-Mexican law was the 1855 act negating the constitutional requirement that laws be translated into Spanish.

Finally, there were growing vigilantism and squatter violence against California landowners.

Land had been the basis of the California socio-economic system. The loss of land after the U.S. conquest undermined that system, in spite of the theoretical protections provided by the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Holders of Spanish and Mexican land grants, most of whom were Mexican Americans, had to seek legal confirmation of their titles. In effect, the federal government placed the burden of proof on the landowners instead of automatically accepting all titles and then handling challenges on an individual basis.

Already suffering from heavy taxes and lacking capital, Chicano landowners had to go through the slow, expensive process of legally confirming their claims, and often were forced to borrow money at high interest rates to cover the costs of the legal struggle. Moreover, they had to argue their cases before U.S. judges and land commissioners unfamiliar with Hispanic legal principles and the land tenure system on which land grants were based. Even when they did win confirmation of their grants, Mexican Americans often found themselves personally destitute, or had to sacrifice their land to pay their legal expenses.

To adjudicate landholdings in California, Congress passed the Land Act of 1851, establishing a Board of Land Commissioners to review claims. If appealed, cases moved on to the U.S. district court, and even the Supreme Court. Of the 813 claims, 549 were appealed (417 by government attorneys), some as many as six times. The board went out of business in 1856, but multiple appeals caused land cases to drag on for an average of 17 years.

Loss of land contributed heavily to relegation of Mexican Americans to the lower echelons of the California socio-economic system. The loss eroded their economic base, undermined their political power, and displaced ranchworkers. Some Chicanos managed to find work in traditional occupations, such as vaquero or sheepshearer, but often only on a part-time basis. Most displaced Chicanos became laborers, poorly paid and often migratory, in expanding large-scale commercial agriculture. Others moved to cities, where their pastoral and agricultural skills were of little use. Many found employment in railroads, construction, and food processing.

Increasingly incorporated into the labor market in the nineteenth century as unskilled or semi-skilled manual laborers, Chicanos experienced job displacement, and in some areas, actual downward occupational mobility. Anglo hostility and low levels of education limited their access to jobs in the rapidly expanding white-collar sector, and Chicanos also encountered obstacles to upward mobility even in occupations in which they had considerable skill and experience. In Los Angeles, for example, Chicanos disappeared completely from the ranks of hatmakers, masons, and tailors. Despite long pastoral experience, Chicanos found employment on ranches only as ranchhands, while Anglos held most supervisory positions.

Another aspect of the nineteenth century economic shift was the entry of Mexican American women into the labor market. As Mexican American men found themselves more occupationally disadvantaged, women became increasingly employed as domestics, laundresses, farm laborers, and cannery and packinghouse workers. A rise in the proportion of female-headed

households reflected these socio-economic stresses.

Concomitant with the Chicano economic decline was emergence of residential and social segregation. Chicano barrios and colonias consisted of various types. Some traditional Mexican towns became transformed into barrios as Anglos immigrated and established their own segregated neighborhoods, or as newly established Anglo cities expanded until they enveloped historic Mexican communities. Displaced Chicanos and immigrating Mexicans often established new barrios and colonias.

Barrios and colonias developed and survived through a combination of force and choice. In Anglo areas, anti-Mexican segregation, often embedded in restrictive covenants on real estate, slammed the residential door on the vast majority of Mexican Americans, the major exceptions being Chicanos with wealth, social status, light skins, and presumed Spanish identity. On the other hand, most Chicanos and new Mexican immigrants probably preferred living among people who shared their heritage, culture, and language. The little intermarriage that took place almost always involved Anglo men and daughters from wealthy "Spanish" families — events that often accompanied business partnerships or political alliances.

In Chicano areas, traditional extended family and community social life flourished. There were bullfights, rodeos, horse races, and various fiestas, including the celebration of Mexican Independence Day (September 16) and Cinco de Mayo (May 5 — the 1862 Mexican victory over the French at Puebla). The Catholic Church often provided a focus for social as well as religious life. Mexican American political, cultural, patriotic, and mutual aid organizations began to develop, but remained generally local in focus. Chicano newspapers strengthened community cohesion and spoke out against injustices, but they were undercapitalized, and were forced to engage in a constant, ultimately losing struggle for survival.

Faced with a pervasive pattern of economic dislocation, declining political influence, violence, and discrimination, Chicanos fought back.

Usually, they maneuvered within the system — through the courts, political channels, and newspapers — but at times they resorted to force to defend their rights. Some Chicanos, such as Tiburcio Vasquez, turned to banditry for survival and as a means of expressing grievances and frustrations with Anglo treatment. Nonetheless, by the end of the nineteenth century, Chicanos had declined from an influential majority to a relatively powerless minority.



Leo Carillo Ranch, San Diego County

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History



A History of Mexican Americans in California: REVOLUTION TO DEPRESSION: 1900-1940

The first three decades of the twentieth century saw rapid growth in the size of the California Chicano population. However, the stage for this growth had been set by years of social and economic changes in Mexico and the United States.

Development of mining and industry in northern Mexico, as well as building of north-south railroad lines, attracted large numbers of Mexicans to the northern part of the country in the late nineteenth century. There they learned new industrial, mining, and railroad skills that would be useful later in the United States. The railroad also provided a quicker and easier means of travel to the north. At the same time, economic pressures were mounting. Many small landowners were losing their holdings to expanding haciendas, while farm workers were increasingly and systematically trapped into peonage by accumulating debts.

Finally in 1910, political opponents of President Porfirio Diaz revolted. He was quickly overthrown, but replacement of his government did not end the Mexican Revolution which spread throughout the country and took on deep social and economic, rather than merely political ramifications. The resulting chaos drove thousands of Mexicans north. Beyond physical proximity, the United States offered jobs — in industry, in mines, on railroads, and in agriculture — and all at wage levels far higher than those in Mexico. World War I further increased the demand for Mexican labor.

In the 1920s, the pace of emigration increased, spurred in part by the short but violent Cristero Revolution (1926-1929), while the U.S. economy continued to expand and attract Mexican labor. Nearly one-half million Mexicans entered the United States on permanent visas during the 1920s, some 11 percent of total U.S. immigration during that decade. Thousands more entered informally, before passage of restrictive regulations. Even after establishment of more stringent immigration rules and procedures, thousands continued to cross without legal sanction. Many of them were ignorant of the required legal processes; others sought to avoid the head tax, the expense of a visa, and bureaucratic delays at the border. Coyotes — as the professional labor contractors and border-crossing experts were known — often received commissions from U.S. businesses. They began the industry of smuggling people and forging documents that continues to the present.

Most Mexican immigrants settled in the Southwest. By 1930, more than 30 percent of Mexican-born U.S. residents lived in California. They entered nearly every occupation classified as unskilled or semi-skilled. Chicanos

became the bulwark of southwestern agriculture. By 1930, manufacturing, transportation, communications, and domestic and personal service had become the other major sectors of Chicano employment. Chicanos made up 75 percent of the work force of the six major western railroads. They also held blue-collar positions in construction, food processing, textiles, automobile industries, steel production, and utilities. In California during the 1920s, Chicanos constituted up to two-thirds of the work force in many industries.

A small Chicano middle class developed, often oriented toward serving the Chicano population. The growth of barrios and colonias fostered expansion of small businesses such as grocery and dry-goods stores, restaurants, barber shops, and tailor shops. Small construction firms emerged. Chicanos entered the teaching profession, usually working in private Chicano schools or in segregated public schools.

Many factors kept Chicanos in a marginal status. The geographical isolation of employment sites, particularly in railroading, agriculture, and agriculturally related industry, often reduced opportunities for Chicanos to gain familiarity with U.S. society through personal contact. Chicanos also encountered various forms of segregation. These included maintenance of separate Anglo and Mexican public schools, restrictive covenants on residential property, segregated restaurants, separate "white" and "colored" sections in theaters, and special "colored" days in segregated swimming pools. Numerous government agencies, religious groups, and private social service organizations, however, made special efforts to assist in the acculturation of Chicanos by providing instruction in the English language, U.S. culture, and job skills.

The dramatic increase in Mexican immigration affected Chicano residential patterns. Thousands settled in older barrios, causing over crowding and generating construction of cheap housing to meet the sudden demand. In some barrios, Mexican immigrants attained such numerical dominance that U.S.-born Chicanos became a minority within a minority. Immigrants sometimes formed new barrios adjacent to historical Chicano areas or new colonias in agricultural or railroad labor camps.

The growth in the size and number of Chicano communities fostered the growth of community activities. In the early twentieth century, there was a major increase in Chicano organizations, particularly *mutualistas* (mutual aid societies). Some adopted descriptive or symbolic names, such as Club Reciproco (Reciprocal Club) or Sociedad Progresista Mexicana (Mexican Progressive Society). Others selected names of Mexican heroes, such as Sociedad Mutualista Miguel Hidalgo (the father of Mexican independence), Sociedad Mutualista Benito Juarez (the famous Mexican Liberal president), or Sociedad Ignacio Zaragosa (the victorious Texas-born general at the Battle of Puebla, 1862).



Casa de Tableta/Buelna's Roadhouse, San Mateo County

Membership varied. Some organizations were exclusively male or female; others had mixed membership. Most developed as representative of the working class, but others were essentially middle or upper-class, or reflected a cross-section of wealth and occupations. Although each mutualista had its special goals, they all provided a focus for social life with such activities as meetings, family gatherings, lectures, discussions, cultural presentations, and commemoration of both U.S. and Mexican holidays.

Most provided services, such as assistance to families in need, emergency loans, legal services, mediation of disputes, and medical, life, and burial insurance. Some organized libraries or operated *escuelitas* (little schools), providing training in Mexican culture, Spanish, and basic school subjects to supplement the inferior education many Chicanos felt their children received in the public schools. Mutualistas helped immigrants adapt to life in the United States. Many mutualistas became involved in civil rights issues, such as the legal defense of Chicanos and the struggle against residential, school, or public segregation and other forms of discrimination. Some engaged in political activism, including support of candidates for public office. At times, mutualistas provided support for Chicanos on strike. Coalitions of Chicano organizations were formed, such as La Liga Protectora Latina (Latin Protective League) and El Confederacion de Sociedades Mexicanas (Confederation of Mexican Societies) in Los Angeles.

In addition to mutualistas, a variety of other cultural, political, service, and social organizations were developed in the early twentieth century, as communities grew or were formed. Possibly the most turbulent Chicano organizational activity of that era was in the labor sphere, where Mexicans played ironically conflicting roles. Because of depressed wages and unemployment in Mexico, Mexican workers could earn more in the United States, even by accepting jobs at pay levels that Anglos refused. Employers thus used Mexican labor to hold down pay scales, and often reached across the border to recruit Mexicans as strikebreakers. Because of the antipathy Mexicans generated in these roles, and also because of the biases of union leaders, local chapters of U.S. labor unions often refused to accept Chicanos as members, or required them to establish segregated locals.

There were Mexican strikers as well as strikebreakers, though. Chicanos were

in the forefront of agricultural strikes. In 1903, more than 1,000 Mexican and Japanese sugar-beet workers carried out a successful strike near Ventura. In 1913, Mexican workers participated in a strike against degrading conditions on the Durst hop ranch, near Wheatland, Yuba County. Although the intervention of National Guard troops and the arrest of some 100 migrant workers broke the back of the strike, the Wheatland events contributed to establishment of the California Commission on Immigration and Housing, and recognition of the oppressive living and working conditions of agricultural laborers.

Throughout the late 1920s and early 1930s, Mexicans heeded or participated in a number of agricultural strikes throughout California. Mexicans struck Imperial Valley melon fields in 1928 and 1930. In 1933, El Monte strawberry fields, San Joaquin Valley cotton fields and fruit orchards, Hayward pea fields, and many other locales were affected. Strikes spread to Redlands citrus groves in 1936, and to Ventura County lemon groves in 1941. Mexicans also challenged the related food-processing industry through strikes by lettuce packers in Salinas in 1936, cannery workers in Stockton in 1937, and others.

Chicanos created a number of their own unions. El Confederacion de Uniones Obreras Mexicanas (CUOM, Confederation of Mexican Labor Unions) was formed in 1928. Among its goals were equal pay for Mexicans and Anglos doing the same job, termination of job discrimination against Chicano workers, and limitation on the immigration of Mexican workers into the United States. At its height, CUOM had about 20 locals and 3,000 workers.

In the early 1930s, Chicanos established some 40 agricultural unions in California. The largest, El Confederacion de Uniones de Campesinos y Obreros Mexicanos (CUCOM, Confederation of Mexican Farm Workers' and Laborers' Unions), created in 1933, ultimately included 50 locals and 5,000 members. Most of these unions later joined the American Federation of Labor or the Congress of Industrial Organizations.

The Great Depression brought a dramatic population reversal among Mexican Americans. Tabulated immigration to the United States from Mexico fell from nearly 500,000 during the 1920s to only 32,700 during the 1930s. At the same time, official figures indicate that some half-million persons of Mexican descent moved to Mexico.

The Depression displaced millions of American workers, and the drastic midwestern drought dispossessed thousands more, many of whom headed for California. As a result, California Chicanos not only lost their jobs in the cities along with other Americans, but also found themselves displaced from agricultural jobs by Dust Bowl migrants. Whereas before the Depression Anglos had composed less than 20 percent of California migratory agricultural laborers, by 1936, they had increased to more than 85 percent.

The shrinking job market caused Anglo attitudes toward Mexicans in the United States to change. Previously welcomed as important contributors to an expanding agriculture and industry, Mexicans now were seen as "surplus labor." No longer considered the backbone of California agriculture and invaluable contributors to other employment sectors, Mexicans instead were viewed as an economic liability, and had become objects of resentment as recipients of scarce public relief funds.

The government's solution was the Repatriation Program. In cooperation with the Mexican government, which had regretted the loss of so many able workers, U.S. federal, state, county, and local officials applied pressure on Mexicans to "voluntarily" return to Mexico. At times, this procedure resulted in outright deportation. Mexican aliens who lacked documents of legal residency, including many who had entered the United States in good faith during an earlier period when immigration from Mexico was a more informal process, were particularly vulnerable. Among the victims of the process were naturalized and U.S.-born husbands, wives, and children of Mexican repatriates, who had to choose between remaining in the United States or maintaining family unity by moving to Mexico.

The Depression era also sharpened long-existent Chicano distrust of government, particularly its agents of law enforcement. During the Depression, the use of violence to break strikes and disrupt union activities was widespread and added to Chicano antagonism toward law-enforcement officials. The Repatriation Program further increased Chicano distrust of government.



La Union Espanola de Vacaville, Solano County

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A History of Mexican Americans in California: WORLD WAR II AND ITS AFTERMATH

World War II marked another sharp reversal in the course of Chicano history, renewing hope where the Depression had brought despair. The Depression had left in its wake a population decline, devastated communities, and shattered dreams; the war brought population growth, resurgent communities, and rising expectations.

World War II caused a tremendous labor shortage. When the military forces called for recruits, Mexican Americans responded in great number and went on to serve with distinction. Some 350,000 Chicanos served in the armed services and won 17 medals of honor. The war also brought industrial expansion, further aggravating the labor shortage caused by growth of the armed forces. Chicanos thus managed to gain entry to jobs and industries that had been virtually closed to them in the past. These new opportunities liberated many Chicanos from dependence on such traditional occupations as agriculture.

The turnaround from the labor surplus of the 1930s to the labor shortage of the 1940s had a special impact on agriculture and transportation. For help, the United States turned to Mexico, and in 1942 the two nations formulated the Bracero Program. From then until 1964, Mexican braceros were a regular part of the U.S. labor scene, reaching a peak of 450,000 workers in 1959. Most engaged in agriculture; they formed 26 percent of the nation's seasonal agricultural labor force in 1960.

Along with opportunities, World War II also brought increased tensions between Chicanos and law-enforcement agencies. Two events in Los Angeles brought this issue into focus. In the Sleepy Lagoon case of 1942-1943, 17 Chicano youths were convicted of charges ranging from assault to first-degree murder for the death of a Mexican American boy discovered on the outskirts of the city. Throughout the trial, the judge openly displayed bias against Chicanos, and allowed the prosecution to bring in racial factors. Further, the defendants were not permitted haircuts or changes of clothing. In 1944, the Sleepy Lagoon Defense Committee obtained a reversal of the convictions from the California District Court of Appeals, but the damage had been done. Los Angeles newspapers sensationalized the case and helped create an anti-Mexican atmosphere. Police harassed Chicano youth clubs, and repeatedly rounded up Chicano youth "under suspicion."

In the aftermath of the convictions and the press campaign, conflict broke out between U.S. servicemen in the area and young Mexican Americans who often dressed in the zoot suits popular during the wartime era. Soldiers and sailors

declared open season on Chicanos, attacking them on the streets and even dragging them out of theaters and public vehicles. Instead of intervening to stop the attackers, military and local police moved in afterward and arrested the Chicano victims. Spurred on by sensational, anti-Mexican press coverage of the "zoot-suit riots," these assaults spread throughout Southern California and even into midwestern cities. A citizens' investigating committee appointed by the governor later reported that racial prejudice, discriminatory police practices, and inflammatory press coverage were among the principal causes of the riots. The Sleepy Lagoon case and the zoot-suit affair provided the basis for Luis Valdez's *Zoot Suit*, which in 1979 became the first Chicano play to appear on Broadway.

Despite such events as these, the World War II era proved to be generally positive for Mexican Americans and is often viewed as a watershed in their history. Progress continued after the war. The G.I. Bill of Rights gave all veterans such benefits as educational subsidies and loans for business and housing. Moreover, returning Chicano servicemen refused to accept the discriminatory practices that had been the Chicanos' lot. The G.I. generation furnished much of the leadership for post-war Mexican American civil rights and political activism.

Veterans were instrumental in the founding and growth of a variety of Chicano organizations. Among the heavily political organizations, the Unity Leagues and the Community Service Organization registered voters in California and supported Chicano candidates. These groups also engaged in such diverse activities as language and citizenship education, court challenges against school segregation, and assistance in obtaining government services. Even more overtly political has been the Mexican American Political Association (MAPA).

Chicano progress since World War II is reflected in occupational patterns. Changes in Mexican American job concentrations reflect to some extent changes in the state economy. Since 1940, California has experienced a manufacturing boom and rapid growth in such areas as government, product distribution, consumer-oriented activities, and professional services. Percentages of Mexican Americans in agriculture and unskilled labor positions have declined, while percentages in professional, technical, managerial, clerical, skilled craft, and semi-skilled occupations have risen.

The post-Depression era brought socio-economic gains for Mexican Americans, but not equality. Although percentages of Mexican Americans in professional, technical, managerial, and clerical positions have increased, they still fall far short of parity according to their population numbers. Moreover, in nearly every major occupational group, Chicanos tend to hold inferior jobs, and Chicano earnings in the same job classifications tend to be lower than those of Anglos.

Inequitable economic conditions are paralleled by comparatively low Chicano educational attainment and severe underrepresentation among elected officials. The latter has resulted partially because thousands of Mexican immigrants have lived in California for decades without obtaining U.S. citizenship. With Mexico so close, many come with plans ultimately to "return home," although these dreams often go unfulfilled. Some Mexican immigrants, although harboring no desire to live in Mexico, have refused to surrender their Mexican

citizenship. In comparison to immigrants from other parts of the world, Mexicans and other Latinos have been more reluctant to become naturalized citizens.

Other factors have also contributed to Chicano electoral underrepresentation. In 1977, for example, a California legislative committee on elections partially attributed Chicanos' limited representation on most city councils in cities with significant Chicano populations to the predominant use of citywide at-large elections instead of district elections. There were no Chicano council members at all in 42 such cities in California. The committee argued that local at-large elections prevent "minority voters from exercising their potential political weight," since "their votes disappear in a sea of majority group votes." On the other hand, some contend that at-large elections make it less likely that candidates will write off minority votes as irrelevant, as can happen in ward-based contests.

When it comes to military service, combat decorations, and wartime casualties, however, Chicanos have been overrepresented in terms of population. Because of their lower educational attainment and restricted employment opportunities, Chicanos have traditionally viewed military service as a viable economic option. And since they were underrepresented in higher education, Mexican Americans did not benefit from student deferments as frequently as Anglos.

Finally, the 1970 U.S. Commission on Civil Rights report, *Mexican-Americans and the Administration of justice in the Southwest*, documented unequal treatment of Chicanos by law-enforcement agencies and the judicial system. Among widespread abuses cited in this and other studies are the lack of bilingual translators in court proceedings; underrepresentation of Chicanos on grand juries, as judges, and as law-enforcement officers; unequal assignment of punishment and probation to convicted Chicanos; excessive patrolling of Chicano barrios; anti-Mexican prejudice among police and judicial officials; and even wrongful use of law-enforcement agencies. In the search for undocumented Mexicans, the U.S. Border Patrol has exacerbated antipathy among Mexican Americans by periodic raids on houses, apartments, restaurants, and bars in Chicano communities and predominantly Chicano places of employment.



Quinto Sol Publication's first office location, Alameda County

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A History of Mexican Americans in California: THE CHICANO MOVEMENT

This negative side of the post-World War II Mexican American experience provided background and impetus for the Chicano movement

Rising from the turbulent 1960s and drawing on the century-long foundation of Mexican American experience, the Chicano movement has become a dynamic force for societal change. The movement is not a monolith, but is rather an amalgam of individuals and organizations who share a sense of pride in *Mexicanidad*, a dedication to enhancement of Chicano culture, mutual identification, a desire to improve the Chicano socio-economic position, and a commitment to making constructive changes in U.S. society.

A major focus of contemporary Chicanos has been politics. Political goals have included increasing the number of Chicano candidates, convincing non-Chicano candidates to commit themselves to the needs of the Mexican American community, conducting broad-scale voter registration and community organization drives, working for appointment of more Chicanos in government, and supporting passage of constructive legislation. Some Chicanos have chosen to work through the two major political parties or through theoretically nonpartisan organizations, such as the Mexican-American Political Association. Others have channeled their political efforts through El Partido de la Raza Unida (PRU, United People's Party), which was founded in south Texas by Jose Angel Gutierrez. While Chicanos have not demonstrated political influence commensurate with their growing numbers, the increase in Chicano elected and appointed officials reflects growing Chicano political presence.

Chicanos have given considerable contemporary attention to economic change. Goals and strategies have varied — upgrading occupations, creating more private businesses (Brown Capitalism), and forming cooperative community development enterprises are examples. The most visible and publicly dramatic aspect of the Chicano economic struggle has been the United Farm Workers' movement led by Cesar Chavez.



Cesar Chavez family home in Delano, Kern County

Education has long been a primary target of Mexican American reformers. Well before the U.S. Supreme Court outlawed school desegregation in the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision of 1954, California Chicanos had challenged educational discrimination. In 1946, *Mendez v. Westminster School District* resulted in banning separate Chicano schools in California. Yet the U.S. Civil Rights Commission pointed out that in the late 1960s, one-quarter of Chicanos in California attended schools with more than 50 percent Chicanos.

The Chicano movement has striven for a variety of educational goals, including reduction of school drop-out rates, improvement of educational attainment, development of bilingual-bicultural programs, expansion of higher education fellowships and support services, creation of courses and programs in Chicano studies, and an increase in the number of Chicano teachers and administrators. The traditional campaign for desegregation and the newer drive for bilingual-bicultural education, of course, involve objectives that are not always easy to reconcile. In a seeming turnabout after years of struggling for desegregation, some contemporary Mexican American educational leaders recently have taken strong stands against cross-town busing in such communities as Los Angeles, fearing that dispersion of Chicano students will prevent them from participating in hard-won bilingual educational programs.

At times, Chicanos have adopted the traditional tactic of working quietly through existing channels, or attempted to elect Chicano or pro-Chicano school board members. At other times, out of frustration, they have turned to walkouts, sit-ins, and direct confrontations with school boards and administrations. Students have provided much of the effort toward educational reform through such organizations as the United Mexican-American Students (UMAS) and Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan (MEChA, Chicano Student Movement of the Southwest). The Chicano movement has also spurred establishment of Chicano alternative schools and institutions of higher education, such as Universidad de la Tierra in Goshen, Universidad de Campesinos Libres in Fresno, and Deganawidah-Quetzalcoatl University in Davis, Yolo County, the first Chicano/American Indian university.

Among other institutions affected by the Chicano movement has been the Catholic Church. Although many individual Catholic priests have historically made non-religious contributions to Mexican Americans, the Church as an institution tended to avoid involvement in Chicano societal issues. During the

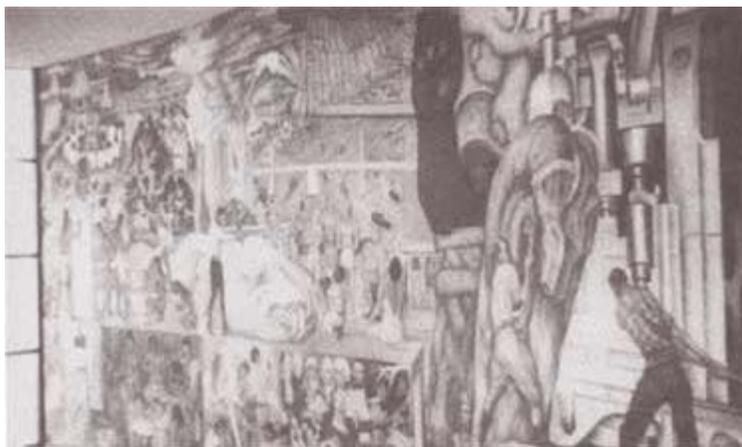
Repatriation Program, for example, the Church generally remained silent, and did little on behalf of affected Mexicans. Although some Catholic priests and Protestant clergymen have taken their place alongside Cesar Chavez and his followers, priests serving in strike areas have often withheld support for the strikers so as not to alienate growers. The Chicano movement generated such organizations as *Catolicos por la Raza* (Catholics for the Chicano People), which challenged the Church for pouring its money into opulent structures while neglecting to invest in social services to improve conditions for the Chicano poor. Some critics addressed the Church's failure to recruit and promote Chicano priests.

The Chicano movement has also generated a Chicano cultural renaissance and has contributed to a broader Hispanic cultural renaissance in the United States. Art, music, literature, theater, and other forms of expression have flourished. Spanish-language and bilingual media, including television and radio stations, newspapers, magazines, and motion pictures, have expanded in number and impact.

Particularly in the twentieth century, Chicanos have worked in such fields of art as painting, drawing, sculpture, and lithography, and in recent years, have developed a full-scale Chicano art movement. Possibly the two most distinctive vehicles of contemporary Chicano art are muralism and graffiti.

Muralism harks back to the tradition of the great Mexican muralists of the post-Revolution era. Mural themes run from dramatizations of the Mexican Revolution to depictions of the Chicano experience too abstract expressionism. Things form of visual expression is a true people's art, oriented toward the many of the community rather than the few in the art gallery. It can be seen on outside walls of stores, schools, churches, hospitals, and government buildings, in public parks, and even on freeway support pillars, often blended imaginatively with architectural elements. Some barrio gangs have become involved in mural painting, at times using murals as boundary lines between their respective turfs.

The pop-art companion to mural art as an omnipresent symbol of barrio expression is Chicano graffiti. Unlike crude or clever sayings and rhymes written on public walls, Chicano graffiti consists of purposefully conceived sets of symbols or symbolic words, notable in their careful, angular lettering. Barrio gangs generally have developed their own special symbols — *placas* — too denote their territory or their presence on the turf of other groups. Some Chicano muralists have integrated graffiti into their work, at times incorporating existing graffiti by painting around the symbols.



*Pan American Unity Mural by Diego Rivera, San Francisco College,
San Francisco County*

Along with the contemporary movement in the visual arts among Chicanos has come a literary movement. Novels, poetry, short stories, essays, and plays have flowed from the pens of contemporary Chicano writers. Two special characteristics are common to many of these writings. First, they often emphasize Mexican American culture and experience, especially the themes of Anglo prejudice, discrimination, and exploitation. Second, they are often bilingual — usually written primarily in English with a smattering of Spanish words and phrases, though some works, particularly poetry, are entirely in Spanish.

One distinctive aspect of current Chicano expression is the *teatro* (theater). Most famous is El Teatro Campesino (Farm Workers' Theater), founded in 1965 by Luis Valdez as a component of Cesar Chavez's United Farm Workers' movement, but now an independent organization. The teatro also emphasizes themes of Anglo discrimination, Chicano resistance, and Mexican heritage. Productions blend English and Spanish, and often include music. Some presentations are a series of relatively brief *actos*, although the teatro also offers full-length plays. Using an epic theater style in which actors interact directly with the audience and demythologize theater, El Teatro Campesino has attained broad popularity, and has inspired creation of other teatros in barrios and universities throughout the country.

The Chicano teatro movement has included both ephemeral groups (some university teatros disappeared after graduation of their founders and early leaders) and some that have managed to survive despite constant financial pressures. A recent artistic trend has been away from the *teatro popular* toward a more professional theater, and greater use of English (partially owing to increased professional training, the growth of U.S.-born Chicano audiences, and the attempt to attract non-Chicano audiences). In 1978, *Zoot Suit* by Luis Valdez premiered, and enjoyed a long run in Los Angeles. The following year, it became the first Chicano play to appear on Broadway.

California has also been the scene of a boom in Chicano publications as a whole, including newspapers, magazines, and scholarly journals. Chicano newspapers have existed in California since the 1850s. However, most have had limited circulation and even more limited longevity, primarily for two reasons. First, the Chicano population remained relatively small until the early twentieth century, and the reading public was rendered even smaller by limited

literacy. Second, such papers were plagued by undercapitalization and limited local advertising. That they achieved even a limited success, particularly during the nineteenth century, is a tribute to the determination of Chicano journalists. This determination paid off in the twentieth century when some Chicano newspapers, such as *La Opinion* (1926-) of Los Angeles, became permanent. The impetus of the Chicano movement in the 1960s and 1970s brought a rapid expansion of the Chicano press, but the problems of undercapitalization and of educating large institutional advertisers to the potential of the Mexican American market remain.

Possibly the newest surge of Chicano expression has come in the field of motion pictures. Chicano filmmakers have expanded from documentaries to feature films, and are sometimes helped by Mexico City studios. Los Angeles, quite naturally, has been the most active movie-making area, with several independent Chicano production companies located there.



Chicano Park/Logan Heights, San Diego County

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A History of Mexican Americans in California: **THE FUTURE**

Unquestionably, Chicanos and other Hispanics will play increasingly important roles in California's future, if for no other reason than numbers alone. Since World War II, Mexican immigration has remained at a constantly significant level. While the Bracero Program and the entry of countless numbers of undocumented workers have received the most scholarly and journalistic attention, there has been a parallel increase in immigration of Mexicans with permanent visas. During the past decade, in particular, there has also been a sharp increase in immigrants from Central America and South America.

Along with this continuous immigration from Latin America, the number of U.S.-born Latinos in California continues to rise. Birth rates and family size among Hispanics continue to be larger than the U.S. average, although recent years have witnessed a decline in the Hispanic birth rate. Moreover, the Hispanic population is considerably younger than the overall U.S. population, another indicator of potential future population increase. One reflection of the changing demographic face of California is the fact that Hispanics now compose about half of all kindergarten students in the Los Angeles Unified School District, the state's largest district, while other school districts are reporting equally dramatic increases in Hispanics.

But numbers alone do not tell the story. While progress has generally been slow, Chicanos and other Hispanics are now making strides in education, political sophistication, and effectiveness for constructive societal change. Their ability to accomplish this change should be further strengthened as pan-Hispanic identity among various Latino national-origin groups becomes a greater reality. These three factors — numerical growth, developing skills and awareness, and greater pan-Hispanic identity — make it almost certain that Hispanics will have an unprecedented influence over the future of California.



Sixteenth Street Victoria Theatre, San Francisco County

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