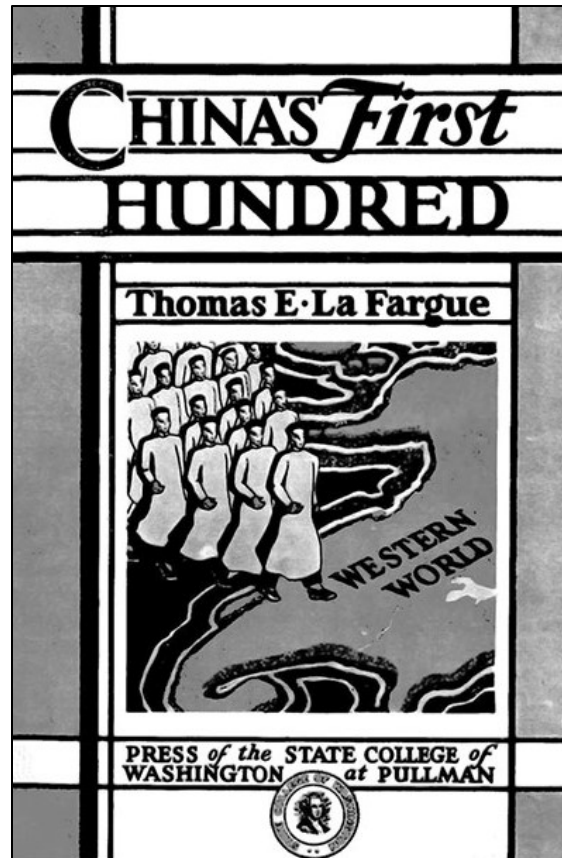


# Historic Context Study of the Chinese Community in Pullman, 1860-1970



*Prepared for*  
City of Pullman and  
Pullman Preservation Commission  
Pullman, Whitman County, Washington

*Prepared by*  
Diana J. Painter, PhD  
Painter Preservation  
Spokane, Washington

August 2023

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**HISTORIC CONTEXT STUDY OF THE CHINESE  
COMMUNITY IN PULLMAN 1860-1970**

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## HISTORIC CONTEXT STUDY OF THE CHINESE COMMUNITY IN PULLMAN 1860-1970

### ABSTRACT

The first significant period of Chinese immigration to the United States began with the California Gold Rush of 1848 and continued into the early 1850s. Gold was a strong lure, as it was for many immigrants during this period. Chinese immigration was also affected, however, by conditions at home, including the Opium Wars, the Taiping Rebellion, and other conflicts and conditions. In the 1860s, when gold became harder to find in California and yields began to wane, the Chinese and others were attracted by subsequent gold rushes in Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and British Columbia.

The next wave of Chinese immigration occurred with the building of the railroads, when large work groups, typically organized by Chinese labor contractors, were 'imported' to construct the grades and related work for the railroads, including the railroads in Whitman County and Pullman. The earliest railroad in Eastern Washington that employed the Chinese was the Walla Walla & Columbia Railroad, which was initiated by Dr. Dorsey S. Baker of Walla Walla and local citizens in 1868; it was completed in 1875, allowing for a link from Walla Walla to Portland via rail and steamship to serve Washington's wheat farmers.

In 1880, there were 500 Chinese railroad workers in Whitman County but once the railroad and telegraph lines were completed in the 1880s, other than lingering section work, the Chinese were out of work. Aside from railroad construction, between 1870 and 1910, Chinese immigrants settled in Colfax, Palouse, Pullman, Tekoa, Garfield and Oakesdale, where they worked primarily doing manual labor, laundry work, truck gardening, and were household servants. Affected by the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act and subsequent legislation, as well as general harassment if not more serious acts, including murder, by 1910 there only 20 Chinese were left in Whitman County.

Animosity toward the Chinese had begun as soon as they began to immigrate to the Pacific Northwest in large numbers, even in the small towns of eastern Washington. Agitation in general was such that by 1882 the US passed the Chinese Exclusion Act, which prohibited the immigration of Chinese laborers to the US, subject to certain exceptions for more desirable immigrants, such as merchants.

In general, the Chinese population in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries peaked in the early 1880s and then began a slow decline through 1900, 1910 and 1920 until the post-World War II era.<sup>1</sup> Nationally this downward trend began with the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and continued with the subsequent passage of the Geary Act in 1892; the Chinese Exclusion Act became permanent in 1904. The peak of the Chinese population coincided with the peak of anti-Chinese sentiment throughout the west coast.<sup>2</sup> The Magnuson Act (sponsored by Rep. Warren G. Magnuson of Washington) repealed the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1943, not long after the bombing of Pearl Harbor.

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century many Chinese went to the major urban centers like Seattle, Portland and Spokane, and settled in the Chinatowns that had begun forming by 1880 in the larger cities. They also diversified in the work they undertook, concentrating in many cases in service industries.<sup>3</sup> In Pullman, after the repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Act, the Chinese population began to recover until by about 1970 it had again achieved the levels it had in 1900, with Chinese residents largely evenly divided between the restaurant industry and students/workers at Washington State University.

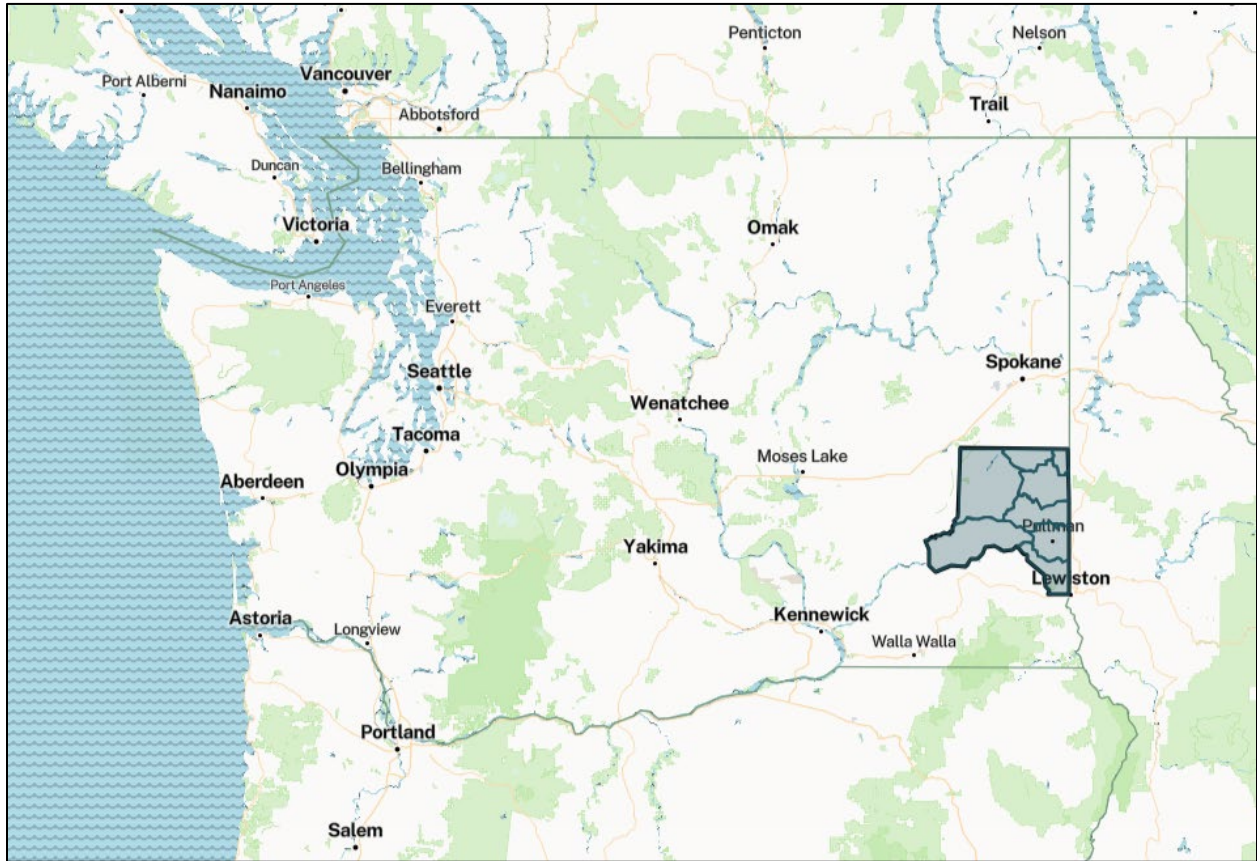
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<sup>1</sup> John McCormick, *Chinese in Napa Valley, The Forgotten Community that Built Wine County*. Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2023:137.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Roger Daniels, "Outsiders in the 'Land of the Free,' Aspects of the Asian-American Experience in the Northwest," *Columbia*, 10:4, Fall, 1996:34.

**Figure 1: Regional location map; Whitman County in the state of Washington**



## INTRODUCTION

This historic context study of the Chinese community in Pullman begins with an introduction to the Native Americans that lived in the area, which were the Nez Perce (Nimiipuu) and the Palouse (Palus), who share Shahaptian linguistic roots. Early exploration of the region is touched on briefly, followed by legislation that established Washington Territory, Washington State, and Whitman County, within which Pullman is located. What was called Palouse Country, which includes Pullman, actually encompasses North Central Idaho, southeastern Washington, and parts of northeast Oregon. The discovery of gold in Eastern Washington in the 1860s begins the narrative on Chinese immigration of the Chinese to the Pacific Northwest.

Construction of the railroads throughout the west coast, including Washington and Whitman County, where Pullman became a rail hub, brought in large crews of Chinese primarily from the Guangdong Province in southern China. An economic slump in the 1880s and perceived loss of jobs to the Chinese, in addition to the large number of immigrants, this brought on legislation at the national and state levels to curtail immigration. It also brought on violence against the Chinese, including in Whitman County. As a result, by 1910 there were only 20 Chinese residents in Whitman County, and by 1920 there were

**Figure 2: Whitman County and the city of Pullman**



considered only twelve. By the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, however, after the repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Act, the Chinese population was recovering to about the level it had been in 1900 and was about evenly divided between Chinese families and individuals in the restaurant business and students at Washington State University.

The 1960s in Whitman County as elsewhere brought on increasing parity between the Chinese and other people of color and white residents due in part to the Civil Rights Movement and other reforms. In 1952 a US Supreme Court case invalidated the remaining western states' alien land laws because they were a violation of the 14th Amendment's equal protection clause. This same year the Immigration and Nationality Act (also known as the McCarran-Walter Act), repealed the remaining laws excluding Asians from immigration to the US and granted citizen rights to Japanese Americans. Finally, the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 abolished national origin quotas.<sup>4</sup> This historic context concludes with a brief discussion of potential historic resources in Pullman that are associated with the Chinese community.

<sup>4</sup> Jacqueline Cheung, "Chinese Immigration and Exclusion Timeline" (ms), 2023. On file, Southern Oregon University, Laboratory of Anthropology, accessed June 2023.

## THE NATIVE AMERICANS IN WHITMAN COUNTY

The area within which the city of Pullman and Whitman County are located is colloquially known as Palouse Country, which takes in North Central Idaho, southeastern Washington, and parts of northeast Oregon. It was first home to Nez Perce (Nimiipuu) and the Palouse (Palus) from along the Snake River (the Snake River forms the southern boundary of Whitman County), which are culturally related and share the Shahaptian linguistic family.<sup>5</sup> In general the Nez Perce were known for their largely friendly relationship with the Euro-Americans; their horsemanship, and the retreat or Flight of the Nez Perce in 1877 under Young Chief Joseph.<sup>6</sup> During the Euro-American settlement era, the Nez Perce were among the Native delegations who traveled to St. Louis in 1831 meet with Meriwether Lewis and William Clark and to request missionaries from the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. The Board responded by sending Reverend Henry H. Spalding and his wife Eliza, who in 1836 established a mission at Lapwai, Idaho; Old Chief Joseph was one of his converts to Christianity. After the murder of the Whitman missionaries Dr. Marcus Whitman, his wife Narcissa, and others in the Walla Walla Valley in 1847, the Nez Perce were among those who attended the 1855 Walla Walla Council called by Territorial Governor Isaac I. Stevens to negotiate with the tribes and place them on reservations. Under the subsequent treaty, the Nez Perce yielded their homeland of about 11 million acres in Idaho and Oregon for a reservation of about 7,694,270 acres.<sup>7</sup>

After gold was discovered on their land in 1860, Americans were permitted to intrude on it. On April 10, 1861, government officials effected an unratified agreement whereby that portion of the reservation lying north of the Snake and Clearwater rivers was to be opened in common to Americans and Indians for mining purposes.<sup>8</sup> Commissions sent by the government to negotiate with the Nez Perces for their reservation secured the cession of June 9, 1863 that left the tribe with a reservation consisting of only 1,182.76 square miles, or one-tenth of its original size.

Embittered and unsuccessful in retaining his ancestral homelands in the Wallowa country, Young Joseph and his band initiated the Nez Perce war with the US, which they lost. Some of the Nez Perces were able to retreat about 1,800 miles to the northeast, toward Canada, but others were captured and sent to Indian Territory (Oklahoma). Eventually some returned to the reservation in Lapwai, but Young Joseph and others settled on the Colville reservation. Lewis and Clark estimated the population of the Nez Perce to be about 6,000 people in 1805-1806. In 1901 they numbered 1,567.<sup>9</sup>

The Paluses occupied the area around the lower Snake River, where they subsisted on salmon and other traditional foods such as berries and roots. The name Palus comes from the name of the large village that was at the mouth of the Palouse River, which in Sahaptin is called *palúus*. In the Palus dialect, it is *pelúus*, and in English is written "Palus." The village name translates literally as "what is standing up in the water," a reference to a large rock in the Snake River near the Palouse River mouth. The Palus people call themselves *Naha'úumpúu*, which means "People of the River."<sup>10</sup> They were one of the tribes

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<sup>5</sup> Robert H. Ruby, John A. Brown and Cary C. Collins, *A Guide to the Indian Tribes of the Pacific Northwest*, Third Edition. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2010 (1986):204, 231.

<sup>6</sup> Ruby, 2010:204.

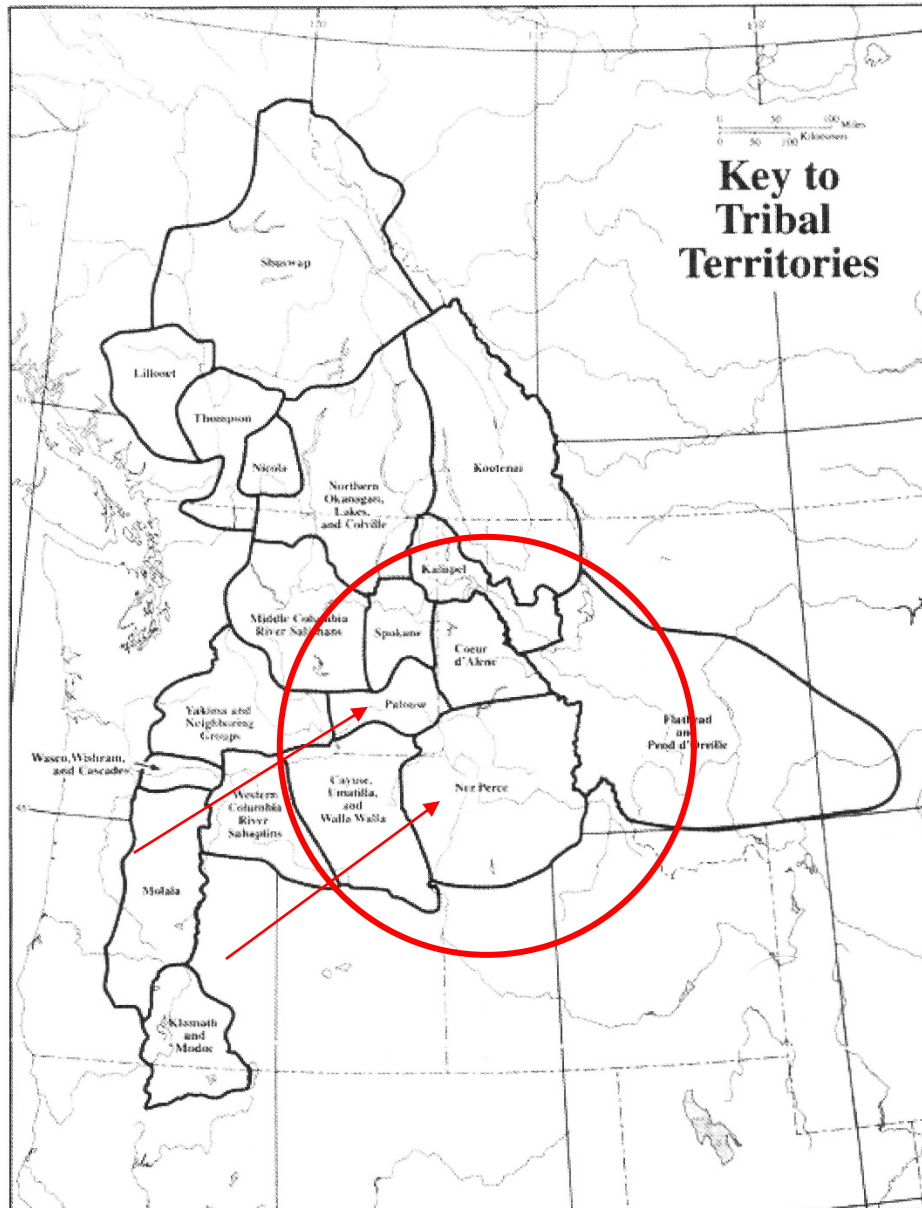
<sup>7</sup> Ruby, 2010:206.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ruby, 2010:206.

<sup>10</sup> There are 34 recorded Palus village locations, many of which were on the Snake River and the lower course of the Palouse River. The upriver villages are also listed as Nez Perce villages and it is likely that Nez Perce and Palus were both resident in these villages at the time of European and Euro-America contact. Lewis and Clark used the name "Chopunnish" to refer to both the Palus and Nez Perce as people from both tribes were co-resident in the upriver village. Lewis and Clark listed the population of the Chopunnish below the mouth of the Clearwater as 2,300. There are many other population estimates for the Palus at the time of Euro-American contact. Sprague (1998) lists a reasonable estimate as 500 people, including 75 at Almota village, 200 at Palus village, 74 at Fishhook village, and 150 at Ainsworth (not including the 150 Wanapum also living at Ainsworth). Personal communication, Matt Root, July

**Figure 3: Tribal territories, showing Palouse and Nez Perce tribal areas**  
Source: "The Nez Perce Homeland and Their Neighbors"



2023, quoting Roderick Sprague, "Palouse," *Handbook of North American Indians*, vol. 12, Plateau, D. E. Walker, Jr., Editor. Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution, 1998, pp. 352–359.



that white treaty makers designated as members of the Yakama Nation in the Walla Walla Treaty of 1855. During the war of 1855-1858 that followed the treaty signing, the Paluses fought against the US under the leadership of Chief Kamiakin. In September 1858, US Army Col. George Wright invaded the Spokane-Coeur d'Alene country in retaliation against the Paluses and other tribes for their part in the defeat of Col. Edward Steptoe the previous May. Tragically, Col. Wright ordered the killing of about eight hundred of the Palus' horses, thus depriving them of their wealth, transportation, and way of life.<sup>11</sup>

In 1877 the Paluses agreed to locate on either a proposed Spokane reservation or on the Coeur d'Alene Reservation. Some joined Chief Joseph in the war of 1877 and were subsequently also exiled to Indian Territory in Oklahoma. They returned to the Colville Reservation with the Nez Perce in 1886. When Lewis and Clark visited the Paluses in 1805-1806, they estimated that their population was about 1,600 people; it was about 500 in 1854. Deprived of their salmon and other traditional foods, in 1919 the Paluses numbered only eighty-two.<sup>12</sup>

## EARLY EXPLORATION AND SETTLEMENT

While Lewis and Clark touched Whitman County briefly during the 1805 Corps of Discovery expedition, the first travelers of Euro-American descent to visit what became Eastern Washington were fur trappers, followed by Catholic and Presbyterian missionaries in the 1830s and 1840s. The stream of newcomers coming to eastern Washington via the Oregon Trail, as well as diseases introduced by new settlers, ultimately led to the massacre of Presbyterian missionary Dr. Marcus Whitman, his wife Narcissa, and twelve of their followers by the Cayuse Indians, along with some of the Umatilla and other tribal allies, at their mission near Walla Walla in 1847. This led to the Cayuse War of 1848, which culminated in 1850 with the hanging of five Cayuse Indians who were deemed guilty of perpetrating the massacre.<sup>13</sup> Following the deaths of the Whitmans, other missionaries left the area. The American Board of Commissioners' mission work among the Cayuse and neighboring tribes was terminated as tensions increased between the Cayuse, the territorial militia, and arriving settlers. The region was effectively closed to Euro-American settlement for the next decade.<sup>14</sup>

Washington Territory was carved out from the Oregon Territory in 1853. In 1855, Territorial Governor Isaac I. Stevens met with several tribes, including the Walla Walla, Cayuse, Umatillas and others, in the Walla Walla Valley with the goal of removing the Indians to designated reservations and allowing for the opening of Washington to white settlement. This ultimately led to the Indian War of 1855-58. Conflict intensified as the discovery of gold in Eastern Washington dramatically increased immigration, causing further conflict between the miners, including Chinese miners, and the Indians.

## CHINESE IMMIGRATION AND THE GOLD RUSH

*The gold frenzy had people from all backgrounds, including whites, African Americans—both freed and enslaved—as well as Latin American and Chinese men seeking to make their fortunes. In 1849, Chinese began immigrating to the United States in order to become gold miners in various western states . . . .*<sup>15</sup>

Trade routes between the Pacific Northwest and China had been established during the fur trade in the early 19th century, when the North West Company established a route between the mouth of the Columbia and the southern port city of Canton in China: "For the first two decades of the nineteenth

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<sup>11</sup> Ruby, 2010:232.

<sup>12</sup> Ruby, 2010:233.

<sup>13</sup> Ruby, 2010:19.

<sup>14</sup> Diana J. Painter, *Walla Walla Downtown Historic District National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*, June 2021:78.

<sup>15</sup> Ellen Terrell, "Chinese Americans and the Gold Rush," (blog), *Library of Congress Blogs*, January 28, 2021, [https://blogs.loc.gov/inside\\_adams/2021/01/chinese-americans-gold-rush/](https://blogs.loc.gov/inside_adams/2021/01/chinese-americans-gold-rush/), accessed June 2023.



century, the history of the Pacific Northwest was the history of the North West Company.”<sup>16</sup> But immigration from China would not begin in earnest until after the California Gold Rush.<sup>17</sup> Anti-Chinese sentiment began almost immediately: “Most of [the Chinese] were searching for gold, and ways were soon found – legal and otherwise – to drive them out of most mines.”<sup>18</sup> While the discovery of gold did not have a direct effect on Whitman County and the development of Pullman, as an agricultural region, it did have the effect of bringing Chinese immigrants to the area.

**Figure 4: Chinese miner near Freedom, Idaho with rocker for placer mining**  
Source: “Outsiders in the ‘Land of the Free’”



#1268-A, Idaho State Historical Society, Boise

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<sup>16</sup> Keith, 2016:245.

<sup>17</sup>McCormick, 2023:24.

<sup>18</sup> Daniels, 1996:31.

Between 1848 and 1867, more than 70 percent of all Chinese immigrants to the US settled in California, where mining dominated the economy by 1849, a year after gold was discovered at Sutter's Fort.<sup>19</sup> The first significant wave of Chinese workers to the state, an estimated 20,000 people, occurred in 1852. Chinese miners in California continued to "eke out a living for much of the 1850s and 1860s," where they typically mined the tailings left by white miners, who were often attracted to easier mining and new strikes.<sup>20</sup> The Chinese worked for non-Chinese-owned companies or as independent gold prospectors. As the number of Chinese immigrating to the gold fields increased, accounting for nearly 30% of all immigrants in 1852, measures were taken in California to discourage them, including establishing a foreign miner's tax. America's first Chinatown, in San Francisco, which formed in the mid-1850s, was a response by the Chinese miners to such legislation.<sup>21</sup>

Gold was a strong lure for the Chinese, as it was for many immigrants during this period. Chinese immigration was also affected, however, by conditions at home. "The Opium Wars, the Taiping Rebellion, secret society uprisings and clan warfare had devastating consequences for laborers and peasants in China in the latter half of the 1800s. Competition from foreign markets, increased taxes, growing population, land scarcity and unrest due to local uprisings all contributed to a mass emigration movement."

Additionally, opium and the disruptions associated with the arrival of foreigners undermined the traditional economies, especially those of the southern provinces from which the majority of immigrants came. Foreign trade was restricted to the southern city of Canton, in the Guangdong Province, where foreigners, including the English, French, Spanish and other Western nationals, established legal immigrant houses and assigned inspectors.<sup>22</sup> From 1840 to 1900 some 2.4 million Chinese left their homeland for Southeast Asia, Peru, Hawaii, the Caribbean and North America.<sup>23</sup>

From the mid-19<sup>th</sup> to the early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, nearly all of the nation's Chinese population was concentrated in the West: "The emerging West depended on an extractive economy, which relied on outside capital, markets, and labor. Chinese immigrants provided labor, skills, and technology needed to develop and build mines, transportation systems, industries, and communities in the West."<sup>24</sup> Settlement occurred not only in California, Oregon and Washington, but also in Idaho, Nevada, Montana, Wyoming and Utah.

Gold rushes in the Pacific Northwest attracted the Chinese and other miners to this region, including strikes in Oregon, Washington, Idaho and British Columbia. Gold strikes in the 1860s occurred in British Columbia, Eastern Washington, Idaho, and eastern and southern Oregon, creating interest in the interior regions.<sup>25</sup> In just a sampling, in 1858 gold was discovered on the Fraser River in British Columbia, bringing Chinese miners from California. Gold was discovered in Colville in 1859. In 1860 Chinese miners began prospecting on the Columbia River: "In 1864, hundreds of Chinese miners could be found placer mining from Rock Island on the Columbia River upstream for a distance of 150 miles;" large mining camps were established from Rock Island to Colville. Small businesses began to service these camps, operating stores, laundries, barber shops, and growing fruit and vegetables for the miners.<sup>26</sup> The first gold strike in Idaho was at Oro Fino in 1860. Gold was first discovered in Cle Elum in 1867 when a prospecting party, consisting of two Goodwin brothers and three others, was following an Indian trail

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> McCormick, 2023:24.

<sup>21</sup> Terrell, (blog), [https://blogs.loc.gov/inside\\_adams/2021/01/chinese-americans-gold-rush/](https://blogs.loc.gov/inside_adams/2021/01/chinese-americans-gold-rush/).

<sup>22</sup> Lloyd Keith and John C. Jackson, *The Fur Trade Gable, North West Company on the Pacific Slope, 1800-1820*. Pullman, WA: Washington State University Press, 2016.

<sup>23</sup> Steven A. Leibo, "From Whence They Came," *Bunchgrass Historian*, Vol. 10, No. 1, Spring 1982:9.

<sup>24</sup> Sally Donovan and Sarah Griffith, *Kam Wah Chung Company Building National Historic Landmark Nomination*, September 2005:15.

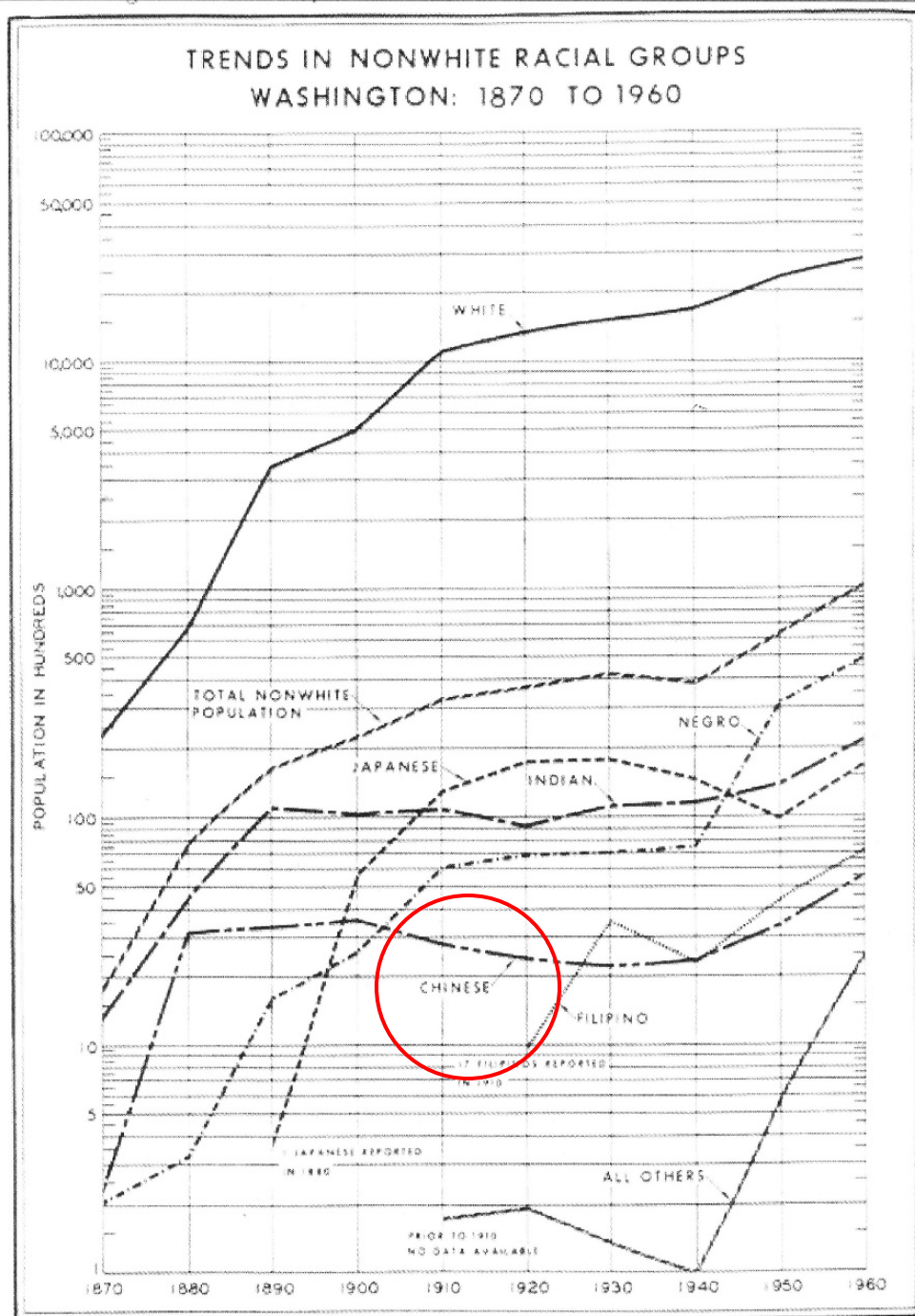
<sup>25</sup> Donovan, 2005:19.

<sup>26</sup> Gaylord, 2000:4.

leading through the Swauk to the Peshastin district. In 1870, the Chinese miners outnumbered the white miners by two to one.

**Figure 5: Growth of the Chinese population in Washington (logarithmic scale)**

Source: Center for the Study of the Pacific Northwest



The Chinese were the first Asians to arrive in Washington Territory and Eastern Washington in large numbers. The Chinese entered Portland in the early 1850s when steamship service was established between Portland and San Francisco in order to supply goods and services to miners in California.<sup>27</sup> From Portland travelers could travel to Walla Walla via the Columbia and hence to other points north and east. Chinese sojourners came from California, but also entered Washington Territory from British Columbia; from Astoria, through Portland and up to Wallula; and via Port Townsend, which was named the official Port of Entry for the Washington Territory in 1854.<sup>28</sup>

According to the 1870 census, there were over 7,800 Chinese in the Northwest at that time, with nearly 2,000 in Montana and nearly 4,300 in Idaho Territory, where they comprised over one quarter of the population.<sup>29</sup> In Washington State, Chinese enclaves formed in Port Townsend, Port Gamble, Bellingham, Tacoma, Fort Colville, and Walla Walla in the 1850s and 1860s.<sup>30</sup> In 1870, there were 234 Chinese people in Washington State, making up 1% of the population. By 1880 there were 3,186 Chinese in the state, making up 4.2% of the population. In Whitman County between 1870 and 1910, the Chinese settled in Colfax, Palouse, Pullman, Tekoa, Garfield and Oakesdale, where they worked primarily doing manual labor, laundry work, truck gardening, and household domestic work.

Settlements in the Pacific Northwest housed support services for the labor force including Chinese-owned mercantile stores, laundries, restaurants, groceries, hotels, residences, gambling hotels, benevolent societies, labor contracting offices, medicinal herb shops, and temples in the larger cities.<sup>31</sup> An example in John Day, Oregon, is the Kam Wah Chung Company building, which operated as a social center, post office, residence, labor contracting office, temple, general store, and medicinal herb shop.<sup>32</sup> Chinatowns, which began to form in the 1880s, also provided a sense of community for the Chinese.

As noted by historian Sally Donovan in her National Register nomination for the Kam Wah Chung Company Building in John Day, Oregon, “The economic declines in the late 1880s and early 1890s in rural communities, combined with other factors that included discriminatory laws, forced the Chinese to return to China or to relocate in urban centers of Portland, San Francisco, Seattle, and Los Angeles by the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.”<sup>33</sup> In Washington State the largest urban center that attracted the Chinese was Seattle in King County. Spokane also had a sizable population of Chinese and a six-block Chinatown beginning in the 1880s.<sup>34</sup>

## THE RAILROADS

The Chinese would eventually abandon mining due to lack of economic opportunity and violence perpetrated against them.<sup>35</sup> The next major wave of Chinese immigration to the West Coast and the Pacific Northwest was at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when railroad building was underway in the US. A major precedent was established for the Chinese constructing the grades for the railroads and related work, including constructing tunnels, with the work of Chinese immigrants on the Central Pacific Railroad in California. By the winter of 1865 Charles Crocker, one of the ‘Big Four,’ transferred his Chinese workers, who had been hired to construct the Dutch Flat Road, a toll road to the Comstock Lode, to the

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<sup>27</sup> Donovan, 2005:33.

<sup>28</sup> Art Chin and Doug Chin, *The Chinese in Washington State*. Seattle, WA: OCA Greater Seattle, 2013:35.

<sup>29</sup> Daniels, 1996:31.

<sup>30</sup> Donovan, 2005:19

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Donovan, 2005:15.

<sup>33</sup> Donovan, 2005:21, 29.

<sup>34</sup> Diana J. Painter, *Highland Park United Methodist Church Spokane Register of Historic Places Nomination*, March 16, 2023:Section 8, page 4.

<sup>35</sup> Daniels, 1996:33.

**Figure 6: Chinese workers constructing a railroad grade**

Source: "Unwelcome Immigrants Who Helped Build the West"



heavier work of the Central Pacific Railroad. In two years alone the Central Pacific hired 12,000 workers.<sup>36</sup> By May of 1865 the Chinese comprised two-thirds of the Central Pacific's work force.<sup>37</sup>

The earliest railroad in Eastern Washington that employed Chinese laborers was the Walla Walla & Columbia Railroad, which was initiated by Dr. Dorsey S. Baker of Walla Walla and local citizens in 1868. The line was intended to replace a wagon route which traveled 32 miles west from Walla Walla to Wallula with grain, wheat flour, and other goods to put on steamships to Portland, where it was shipped as far as England. A survey of the route was conducted in partnership with the Northern Pacific Railroad.<sup>38</sup> Construction began in 1871 with several gangs of Chinese laborers grading the line; it was completed in 1875.

In the 1870s, thousands of Chinese were recruited directly from China to also work on the Northern Pacific Railroad: "Fifteen thousand Chinese laborers, comprising two-thirds of the workforce, were recruited by the Northern Pacific Railroad and were instrumental in completing the first northern transcontinental rail connection in 1883. They were also hired in large numbers to work on the Oregon Railroad and Navigation Company (OR&N) lines and other major railroad lines in Spokane, Whitman and Stevens counties."<sup>39</sup> Author Mary Gaylord states that the Chinese graded almost all the railroad lines in

<sup>36</sup> Donovan, 2005:18.

<sup>37</sup> Richard J. Orsi, *Sunset Limited, The Southern Pacific Railroad and the Development of the American West, 1850-1930*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2005:16.

<sup>38</sup> The Northern Pacific Railroad began construction of the extension from Kalama to Tacoma in 1871 using nearly 2,000 Chinese laborers. The Northern Pacific transcontinental railroad would be completed in 1883, using nearly 17,000 over the entire span of the project.

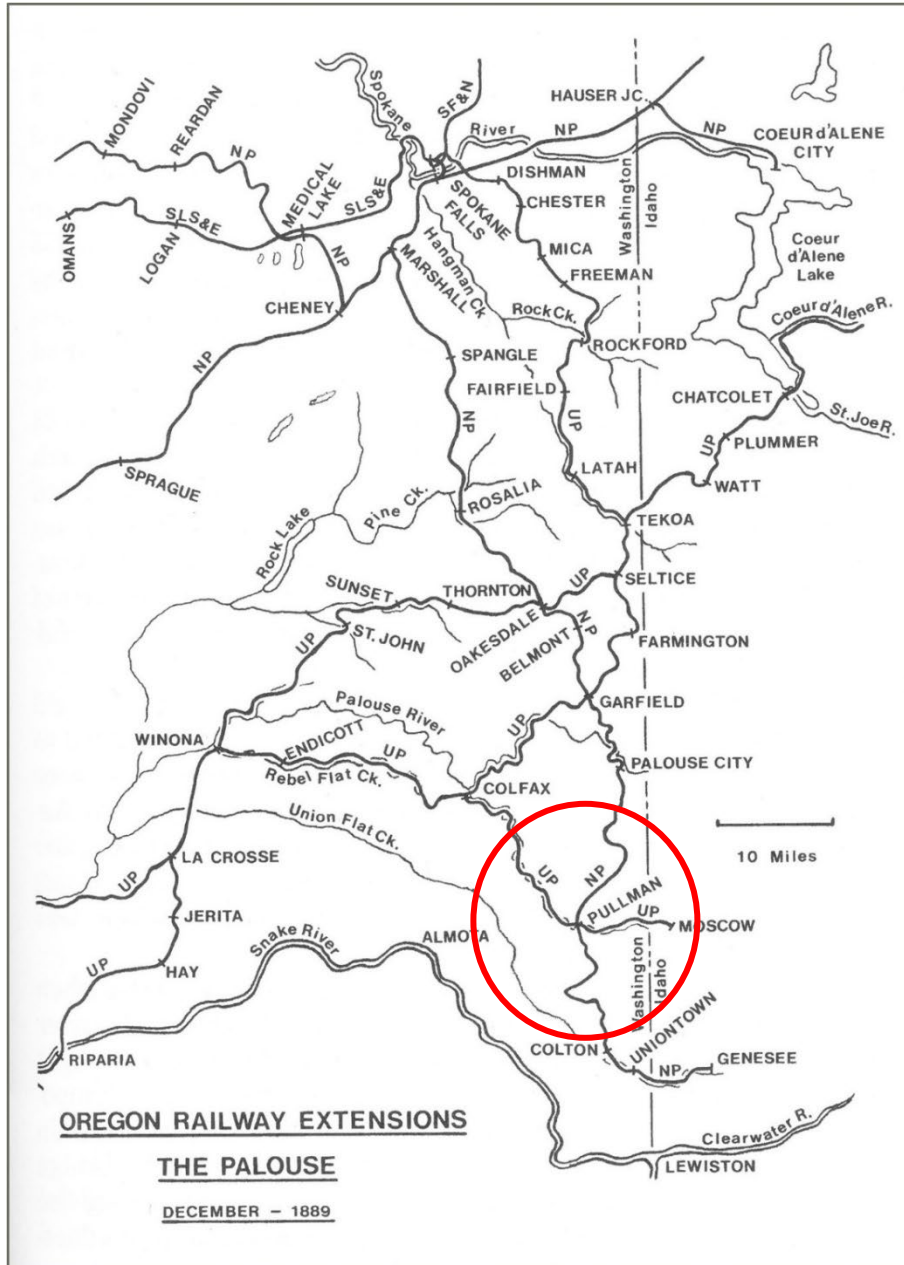
<sup>39</sup> Gaylord, 2000:4.



Whitman and Spokane counties and laid tracks for the OR&N lines “from Tucannon to Riparia, from Riparia to LaCrosse, from LaCrosse to Colfax, on to Farmington, and finally into Tekoa.”<sup>40</sup>

**Figure 7: Railroads in Pullman and beyond in 1889**

Source: Oregon Railway Extensions, The Palouse



<sup>40</sup> Gaylord, 2000:55.

## The Railroads in Pullman

By 1885, the Union Pacific, which had gained control of the OR&N and its subsidiary, the Columbia and Palouse Railroad, completed a line to Pullman and Moscow, Idaho. This was followed by the Northern Pacific Railroad, which built another line through Pullman from Sprague to Genesee, Idaho in 1886-1888.<sup>41</sup> The railroads freed farmers from price-fixing by Portland grain speculators and the OR&N. The railroads also supported the growth of the young city of Pullman.

By 1888, the OR&N approached Pullman from Colfax and continued east to Moscow. In 1888, the Spokane & Palouse railroad (S&P) approached Pullman from the north and continued south to Colton and east to Genesee. In 1889 the Union Pacific (on the OR&N tracks) approached Pullman from the northwest and continued east to Moscow and the Northern Pacific (on the S&P tracks) approached Pullman from the north, traveling from Spokane and continued south and east to Colton and Genesee.

Yet the railroads no longer offered work in Whitman County by the 1890s, with the exception of section work. Yet some Chinese stayed. They stayed in such towns as Colfax, Palouse City, Pullman, Tekoa, Garfield and Oakesdale. By 1920, however, there were only 12 Chinese residents in Whitman County.

## ANTI-CHINESE VIOLENCE IN WASHINGTON STATE

Anti-Chinese sentiment in Washington State began as soon as significant numbers of Chinese began to immigrate to the Pacific Northwest. Attitudes grew in intensity, particularly among white laborers, during economic hard times and over labor issues. There were other motivations too, however. There was a perception that the Chinese were taking jobs that should more rightly go to white laborers. There was also the fact that Chinese laborers were paid less than white workers, which some regarded as unfair labor practices, undercutting the job market. Others felt that the fact that the Chinese sent money back to China weakened the economy.<sup>42</sup> One of the worst acts of violence occurred at a Chinese mining site on the Snake River in Idaho, a place that is now called Chinese Massacre Cove.<sup>43</sup> There over 30 Chinese miners were robbed and killed in this remote location by a gang of white rustlers who were identified but never punished.<sup>44</sup>

In Washington State the worst massacre of Chinese miners, involving several hundred Chinese, was perpetrated in 1875 in the Methow and Chelan Falls area by followers of Chief Moses and included members of the Okanogan, Methow, Chelan, and Entiat tribes. This appears to have been in retaliation for the Chinese mining within the tribes' territory.<sup>45</sup>

Much of the violence against the Chinese in the Pacific Northwest and California occurred in the mid-1880s and into the 1890s. Additional examples from Washington State, Whitman County, and Pullman are as follows. In 1880, 25 Chinese miners were killed in Salmon le Sac (Roslyn/Swauk). No Chinese apparently returned to this area.<sup>46</sup> The Northern Pacific Railroad also did not hire Chinese laborers when they built their railroads to this area for coal mining.

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<sup>41</sup> Gaylord, 2000:76.

<sup>42</sup> Gwen Perkins, "Exclusion in Washington," (brochure). Washington State Historical Society, <https://www.washingtonhistory.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/WAExclusion.pdf>, n.d.

<sup>43</sup> This has also been referred to as the Snake River Massacre or Hells Canyon Massacre.

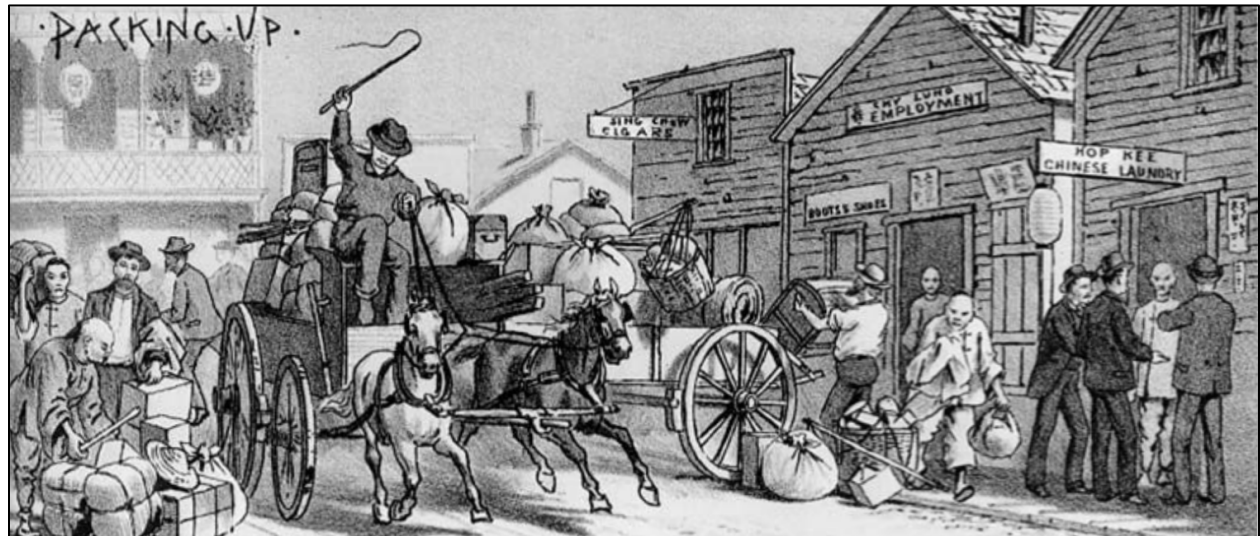
<sup>44</sup> R. Gregory Nokes, *Massacred for Gold, The Chinese in Hells Canyon*. Corvallis, OR: Oregon State University Press, 2009.

<sup>45</sup> "The Chelan Massacre Reconsidered," *Chinese in North America Research Committee*, <https://www.cinarc.org/>, accessed August 2023. See also Gaylord, 2000:27.

<sup>46</sup> Gaylord, 2000:79.

### Figure 8: Anti-Chinese agitation in Seattle, 1886

Source: Chinese in Northwest America Research Committee,



Three miners were murdered by whites on the Palouse River in 1884. In Squak (Issaquah today), three Chinese hop pickers were murdered and four wounded by whites and Indians in 1885. The attackers were acquitted of murder and instead convicted of rioting and fined \$500.<sup>47</sup> In Port Townsend, a Chinese man was killed in 1886. In other locations the Chinese were expelled or driven out with varying levels of coercion. Sometimes homes were burned, such as at Newcastle and Coal Creek in 1885. In 1885, the attempt to rid Tacoma of its Chinese citizens was orchestrated by the Knights of Labor with the cooperation of community leaders and public officials.<sup>48</sup> “The citizens of Tacoma took pride in their system for expelling all 500.<sup>49</sup> Chinese residents were expelled through threats and forcible assistance but with no overt violence. The system, dubbed the “Tacoma Method” or “Tacoma Solution,” was extolled in an article by George Dudley Lawson in the 1886 *Overland Monthly*, published out of San Francisco.<sup>50</sup> A key feature of the method was the wholehearted involvement of the mayor and the chief of police.”<sup>51</sup> The day after loading the Chinese population on a train to depart Tacoma, Chinatown was burned. Tacoma, despite its status as a relatively large city in Washington State, never did regain a substantial Chinese community.

When the Knights of Labor attempted to do the same thing in Seattle in February 1886, local Chinese community leaders gained the cooperation of officials, including Judge Thomas Burke, Territorial Governor Watson Squire, and the Chinese imperial consulate-general in San Francisco.<sup>52</sup> More than half

<sup>47</sup> “The Squak (Issaquah) Massacre, 1885,” *Chinese in North America Research Committee*, <https://www.cinarc.org/>, accessed June 2023.

<sup>48</sup> The Knights of Labor was an organization that was active in the late 19th century, especially the 1880s that protected workers’ rights and “promoted the social and cultural uplift of the worker.” It supported the, supported the Chinese Exclusion Act, claiming that industrialists were using Chinese workers as a wedge to keep wages low. “Knights of Labor,” *Wikipedia*, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Knights\\_of\\_Labor](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Knights_of_Labor), accessed June 2023.

<sup>49</sup> Another alternate source notes that 700 were expelled.

<sup>50</sup> *Overland Monthly*, 1886:234-240.

<sup>51</sup> “The Tacoma Method, November 1885,” *Chinese in Northwest America Research Committee*, <https://www.cinarc.org/>, accessed June 2023.

<sup>52</sup> Governor Squires was sent a telegram from the Consulate General stating the following: “In conformity with instructions from Washington through Chinese Legation to call your attention without delay to any threatened outrage upon Chinese in your territory we now inform you that we are this day in receipt of information that Chinese in Seattle have been notified by the so-called Knights of Labor to leave that place or take the consequences. Will you please give your immediate attention to this matter. Owyang Ming Consul General, F.A. Bee Consul.



of Seattle's Chinese community were boarded onto ships to depart from the area before city officials could intervene. Judge Burke spoke to the rioting anti-Chinese mob, trying to dissuade them. He was accompanied by about 150 armed citizens who were protecting the Chinese: "Seattle's leaders opposed the idea [of expelling the Chinese], partly from principle and partly out of fear of what else a rioting mob might do."<sup>53</sup> Martial Law was declared and 350 troops were brought in. An illustrated report of the incident was published nationally in *Harper's* and in *West Shore* magazine.

Acts of violence were also seen in Whitman County, in Tekoa, Malden, and outside of Palouse. In Tekoa and Malden a Chinese man was lynched for seeking a job, when he was unable to read the sign in English that said Chinese were not allowed. In Pullman rocks were thrown at all the Chinese homes in the city, breaking out windows. The "irresponsible toughs," as they were called in the *Spokesman Review*, also ordered the Chinese to leave. The acts were described as follows in a 1892 issue of the newspaper:

*A party of small boys whose parents should be punished for neglect of duty, assisted by a few irresponsible toughs, distinguished themselves . . . by going from one Chinese house to another, stoning them until their windows were broken and ordering the inmates to leave town. The citizens are very indignant over the affair and several arrests are about to follow.*<sup>54</sup>

## ANTI-CHINESE LEGISLATION

### 19<sup>th</sup> Century Legislation and Discrimination

The following pieces of major federal legislation curtailed Chinese immigration until the repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1943. The long-standing Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 was preceded by the US Page Act of 1875 and the Angell Treaty.<sup>55</sup> The Page Act prohibited Asian forced laborers and Asian women suspected of engaging in prostitution from entering the US. This applied to the Chinese and other Asians as well. The Angell Treaty of 1880 restricted free immigration on the basis of race for the first time. It also divided Chinese immigrants into two groups, laborers and a "welcomed" class.<sup>56</sup>

The Chinese Exclusion Act of May 6, 1882 denied entrance to the US by men of Chinese ancestry, with the exception of merchants, teachers, students, and diplomats, whom they considered desirable. The prohibited laborers were defined as both skilled and unskilled, as well as Chinese employed in mining. Laborers who were in the US at the time of the 1880 Angell Treaty were allowed to stay and could travel roundtrip to China provided that they obtain an identification certificate. The act also denied the Chinese from becoming naturalized, thereby denying citizenship to all Chinese immigrants, and the right to purchase land.<sup>57</sup> It was to be in effect for ten years. Soon afterwards, in 1884, another act was passed that defined and further constricted who could qualify as a merchant. It included special provisions for denying Chinese the right to preserve shellfish or other fish "for home consumption or exportation." In 1888, the Scott Act prohibited the return of previously certified US resident Chinese laborers, which had the effect of denying 20,000 to 30,000 Chinese from re-entering the US. Exceptions were as follows. They could re-enter the US if they had a wife, child or parent in the US, had property valued at \$1,000, or if someone in the US owed them \$1,000.

Chinese citizens were further restricted by the 1892 Geary Act. In this act resident Chinese had to register and carry identification verifying that they were permitted to live in the US. The act defined laborers and

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<sup>53</sup> "The Seattle Anti-Chinese Riot, February 1886," *Chinese in Northwest America Research Committee*, <https://www.cinarc.org/>, accessed June 2023.

<sup>54</sup> *Spokane Review*, June 23, 1892, as quoted in Prescilla Wegers', "Chinese in Moscow, Idaho, 1883-1909," *The Historian*, November 1989, Vol LII, No 1:94.

<sup>55</sup> In 1870 the US Naturalization Act allowed naturalization rights to people of African American descent and ex-slaves, but the Chinese continued to be denied the right of naturalization.

<sup>56</sup> Cheung, 2023.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

extended the prohibition on immigration to also include laundrymen. It provided a definition of merchant as, "a person engaged in buying and selling merchandise, at a fixed place of business, which business is conducted in his name, and who during the time he claims to be engaged as a merchant, does not engage in the performance of any manual labor . . ." The name of a partner was initially required to be part of the business name, but later could be included if "Company" was part of the business name.<sup>58</sup> This can be seen in the census when a restaurant, for example, might be owned by several partners. It could also be seen in directories showing business names, when "Company" was appended to an individual's name. In 1900 case law was established that allowed the wife and children of a Chinese merchant to come to the US. In 1892 the Chinese Exclusion Act was extended another ten years and in 1904 it was made permanent.

In addition to federal legislation, the State of Washington passed its own discriminatory legislation limiting the activities of Chinese immigrants in the state. This legislation began very early in the immigrants' tenure in the Pacific Northwest. In 1853 a territorial law was passed banning Chinese residents from voting in Washington. In 1863 a law was passed banning the Chinese from testifying in court cases involving whites in Washington. In 1864 a poll tax was passed.<sup>59</sup> In 1921 alien land restrictions were passed in Washington state, possibly inspired by the Alien Land Act passed in 1913 in California that prohibited Asians from owning land. Additional restrictions in the Washington state laws were added in 1923. With this legislation, the Chinese were prohibited not only from owning land, but also leasing, renting, and sharecropping land.<sup>60</sup>

**Figure 9: Partners in the Oriental Restaurant in 1950**

Source: US census, 1950

A handwritten list of seven partners for the Oriental Restaurant in 1950, recorded on a US census form. The list is organized into a table with two columns: the partner's name and their role. The entries are as follows:

1	ENG, GEORGE Y. Head
2	Ng, Gum Chung Partner
3	MITAUCHI, ETSURO Partner
4	Ng, Suk yen Partner
5	ENG, George K. Partner
6	Toak, Loan Chong Partner
7	ENG, Ho Jae Partner

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Matthew W. Klinge, "Timeline: Asian Americans in Washington State History," *A History Bursting With Telling: Asian Americans in Washington State*. Seattle, WA: Center for the Study of the Pacific Northwest, University of Washington Department of History, <https://www.washington.edu/uwired/outreach/cspn>, accessed June 2023.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

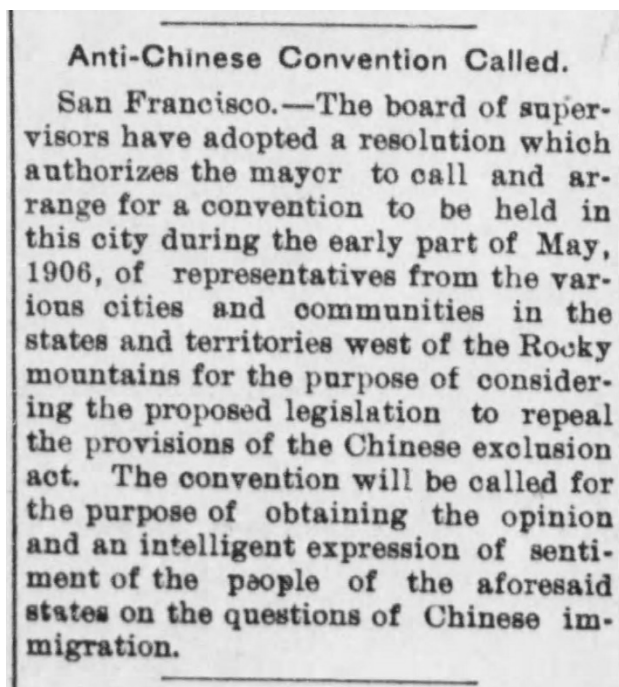
Whether or not to extend the Chinese Exclusion Act was debated at the national and local levels, including news items published in the *Pullman Herald* and the *Colfax Gazette*. The Supreme Court's ruling that the US Geary Act was constitutional and discussing the impact that would have on the Chinese community in San Francisco was also published locally in the *Pullman Herald* on May 19, 1893. The issues – both pro and con – were debated. The following news item published on May 8, 1889, displays a local anti-immigration stance: “We demand the rigid enforcement of the Chihese [sic] exclusion act and heartily favor such further legislation as may be deemed necessary, in order to put a final and effectual stop to the immigration of all who are unfit for American citizenship, and unable to comprehend the fundamental principles of our government.”

## 20<sup>th</sup> Century Legislation

Heavy restrictions on who could immigrate to the US continued into the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. On February 5, 1917, Congress passed the Immigration Act of 1917, also known as the Asiatic Barred Zone Act. It was intended to prevent “undesirables” from immigrating to the US. It primarily targeted individuals immigrating from Asia. This was defined as people from any country not owned by the US adjacent to the continent of Asia. The Act required an English literacy test and taxed immigrants eight dollars per person for immigrants aged 16 years or older. In addition to Asian immigrants, including those from India, it also targeted Mediterranean and Mexican immigrants. It would remain in effect until the Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1952, which eliminated racial restrictions in immigration and naturalization statutes.<sup>61</sup> In 1924, national origin quotas were established in the US Immigration Act and the Asian Exclusion Act. This act also banned immigration from anyone not eligible to become an American citizen, which applied to both Chinese and Japanese immigrants.

### Figure 10: Debating the extension of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882

Source: The *Pullman Herald*, February 17, 1906



<sup>61</sup> “Immigration Act of 1917 Bans Asians, Other Non-White People from Entering U.S.,” *A History of Racial Injustice*. <https://calendar.eji.org/racial-injustice/feb/5#>, accessed June 2023.

In 1943, the Chinese Exclusion Act was repealed but a quota on immigration was established. Only one hundred and five Chinese immigrants could enter the country per year. In this Act Chinese people or persons of Chinese descent became eligible for naturalization for the first time. Introduced by Washington Senator Warren G. Magnuson. It became known as the Magnuson Act. It followed on the February 19, 1942 Executive Order 9066, issued by President Franklin Roosevelt, that authorized the forced removal of all persons deemed a threat to national security from a 100-mile-wide area on the West Coast to "relocation centers" further inland – resulting in the incarceration of Japanese and Japanese Americans after the December 7, 1941 bombing of Pearl Harbor.

In 1952, a US Supreme Court case invalidated the remaining western states' alien land laws because they were determined to be a violation of the 14th Amendment's equal protection clause. This same year the Immigration and Nationality Act (also known as the McCarran-Walter Act), repealed the remaining laws excluding Asians from immigrating to the US and granted citizen rights to Japanese Americans. The Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 abolished national origin quotas and encouraged the immigration of families. Family preferences included unmarried children of US citizens, unmarried children and spouses of permanent residents, and the married children and their dependents and the siblings and their dependents of US citizens. Members of the professional classes were also preferred.<sup>62</sup> This spurred a wave of immigration and thousands of Chinese, mostly from Taiwan and Hong Kong, immigrated to the United States.<sup>63</sup>

## THE CHINESE IN PULLMAN

### The Founding of Pullman

Pullman is the largest city in Whitman County, best known as one of the most productive dryland wheat farming regions in the country, due in part to its Loess or silt-like soil.<sup>64</sup> It is located at the confluence of three streams, the Missouri Flat Creek from the north, Dry Fork from the south, and the South fork of the Palouse River from the east, hence its historical name of "Three Forks."<sup>65</sup> The town is characterized by the same topography as seen in Palouse Country in general, with the difference that roads and building lots are graded and developed.

The Pullman area was first used by Native Americans to graze their horses, due to its rich grasslands. With the advent of Euro-American settlement, the area was used for stock raising, including cattle and sheep, the latter of which summered on Moscow Mountain but spent the winters on the Snake River. It was soon clear that the area was eminently suitable for raising wheat. Flax was grown in addition to wheat, oats, and barley. Orchards and other fruit crops included apples, peaches, plums, pears, apricots, cherries, prunes, mulberries and other berries, grapes and melons. Root vegetables also did well in the climate.<sup>66</sup>

Pullman developed later than some of the other Whitman County towns. For example, Palouse was founded in 1874 and incorporated in 1888 and Colfax was founded in 1876 and incorporated in 1879.<sup>67</sup> Early settlers in Pullman, who arrived in 1876-1877, were Bolin Farr, Dan McKenzie and William

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<sup>62</sup> Cheung, op. cit.

<sup>63</sup> "Chinese Americans in the Columbia River Basin - Historical Overview," Washington State University Libraries Digital Collection, <https://content.libraries.wsu.edu/digital/collection/cchm/>, accessed August 2023.

<sup>64</sup> Phil Dougherty, "Whitman County – Thumbnail History," *historylink.org*, February 17, 2016 (October 13, 2006). <https://historylink.org/File/7882>, accessed May 2023.

<sup>65</sup> Lever, 1901:211.

<sup>66</sup> William R. McLean, *Bensel's Pullman City Directory For the Year 1891*, Fond du Lac, WI: A.A. Bensel, Publisher, 1891. Today legumes are also grown.

<sup>67</sup> Rita Cipalla, "Palouse – Thumbnail History," *Historylink.org*, April 22, 2020. <https://www.historylink.org/File/21016>, accessed April 2023.

Ellsworth.<sup>68</sup> The first store was opened in 1881, the same year that the town was platted. The town was incorporated in 1888 with a population of about 250-300 people. In 1890, the population was 868 and in 1900 it was 1,308.

### **Pullman's 19<sup>th</sup> Century History**

Pullman was first settled by D.G. McKenzie in September 1877, soon followed by several houses. McKenzie platted 50 acres of his land in the spring of 1882, but in November Charles Moore surveyed a large addition and the first plat was resurveyed so that the streets corresponded.<sup>69</sup> A merchandise store and drug store was constructed by 1881, in addition to the dwelling of Oroville Stewart. A blacksmith shop followed. In 1881 the first schoolhouse was built. By 1883 the Palouse branch of the OR&N was located, which spurred Pullman's first real growth. A hardware, furniture and drug store, two blacksmith shops, a livery, and two saloons were soon established. Following a period of stagnation caused by a cessation of the Moscow branch of the OR&N, work resumed in 1885 and the line was completed to Moscow.

The town burned on July 4, 1886. In the winter of 1886-1887 an extension of the Spokane and Palouse branch of the Northern Pacific Railroad was proposed. Once the route was settled and it was determined that it would pass through Pullman, another spurt of growth occurred, including the establishment of the Bank of Pullman.<sup>70</sup> The city burned again on June 26, 1887, after which two business blocks were rebuilt in brick. Pullman was incorporated in April 1888. The town burned a third time on July 3, 1890.<sup>71</sup> This same year a new water plant was funded, and street lighting was installed.

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<sup>68</sup> As noted by author Bob King in a 2022 story in *Bunchgrass Historian* entitled "How Pullman, Washington, got its name": Bowlin Farr's name is often misspelled. The spelling he used was "Bowlin," as evidenced by documents he signed both in Washington State and Missouri.

<sup>69</sup> Lever, 1901:211.

<sup>70</sup> Lever, 1901:212.

<sup>71</sup> Lever, 1901:213.



**Figure 11: Ad for Pullman in 1891 Bensel Directory**  
Source: Bensel's Pullman City Directory For the Year 1891

82

THE NORTHWEST MAGAZINE, OCTOBER, 1892. 35

# PULLMAN, WASH.,

Situating in the Center of the Garden Spot of  
**THE FAMOUS PALOUSE COUNTRY.**

It is a thriving business center of handsome brick blocks, spacious and well-stocked stores, beautiful residences, flourishing mills and factories, and is the great educational center of the State of Washington.

It has the State Agricultural College,

one of the largest and most important educational institutions in the State. The only military school in Washington, and the most beautiful and imposing public school buildings in the State. The city of Pullman is rich in resources, rich in good schools and Christian churches, good government and good credit. Its people are bold in enterprise, firm in purpose, liberal in supporting all public measures, moral in their lives, and warm in their hospitality.

**THEY WELCOME GOOD PEOPLE FROM EVERY STATE AND FROM EVERY LAND.**

There is no place in any State in the Union that offers a better field for honest endeavor or investment than Pullman.

**IT IS REACHED BY TWO OF THE GREAT TRANSCONTINENTAL RAILROADS,**

the Northern Pacific and the Union Pacific, and is growing faster than any city of its size in America.

**PULLMAN IS THE CITY OF FLOWING WELLS,**

It having nine artesian wells throwing their cold, clear streams of sparkling waters high into the air, forming fountains that for beauty rival the famed fountains of Cashmere.

To one who is familiar with the situation it is no wonder that Pullman is a thriving, growing, rich city. Situated in the very heart of the great Palouse wheat country, surrounded by hundreds of thousands of acres of lands that yield from forty to sixty bushels of wheat to the acre—is a country, too, where crops never fail, where wheat, barley, oats, flax, rye, all the grasses, fruits and berries thrive as nowhere else in the world, its prosperity is only natural.

Its famous Artesian Waters are the healthiest to be found on the American continent.

An estimate of the chief products of Whitman County, (of which the city of Pullman is one of the leading business centers) for 1891 places the grain product at 18,500,000 bushels, with wheat as chief factor at 10,750,000; barley, 1,250,000; oats, 500,000; flax, 500,000; rye, 250,000. The money received for this grain added \$10,112,500 to the wealth of the county; for the average price last year was seventy-five cents a bushel for wheat; sixty cents for barley; eighty cents for oats; \$1 for flax and \$1.10 for rye, making \$9,000,500 for wheat; barley, \$750,000; oats, \$400,000; flax, \$500,000, and rye, \$275,000.

The opportunities for settlement and investment in the Palouse Country are numerous and the investor or settler finds sure and rich reward for all outlay of money or energy. Capitalists will find here opportunities for doubling their wealth, while the manufacturer, the farmer, fruit grower, stock raiser and wood worker will find chances for advancement on the road to wealth before undreamed of.

For further particulars call on or correspond with any of the following reliable firms and business men of Pullman:

<p><b>Pullman State Bank,</b> <b>Pullman Land and Investment Co.,</b> <b>W. V. Windus,</b> <b>W. G. Bragg,</b> <b>Thos. Neill,</b> <b>W. C. True,</b></p>	<p><b>McConnel, Chambers Co.,</b> <b>Pullman Hardware Co.,</b> <b>The Pullman Mercantile Co.,</b> <b>Thos. W. Savage,</b> <b>C. O. Morrell,</b> <b>Pullman City Council.</b></p>
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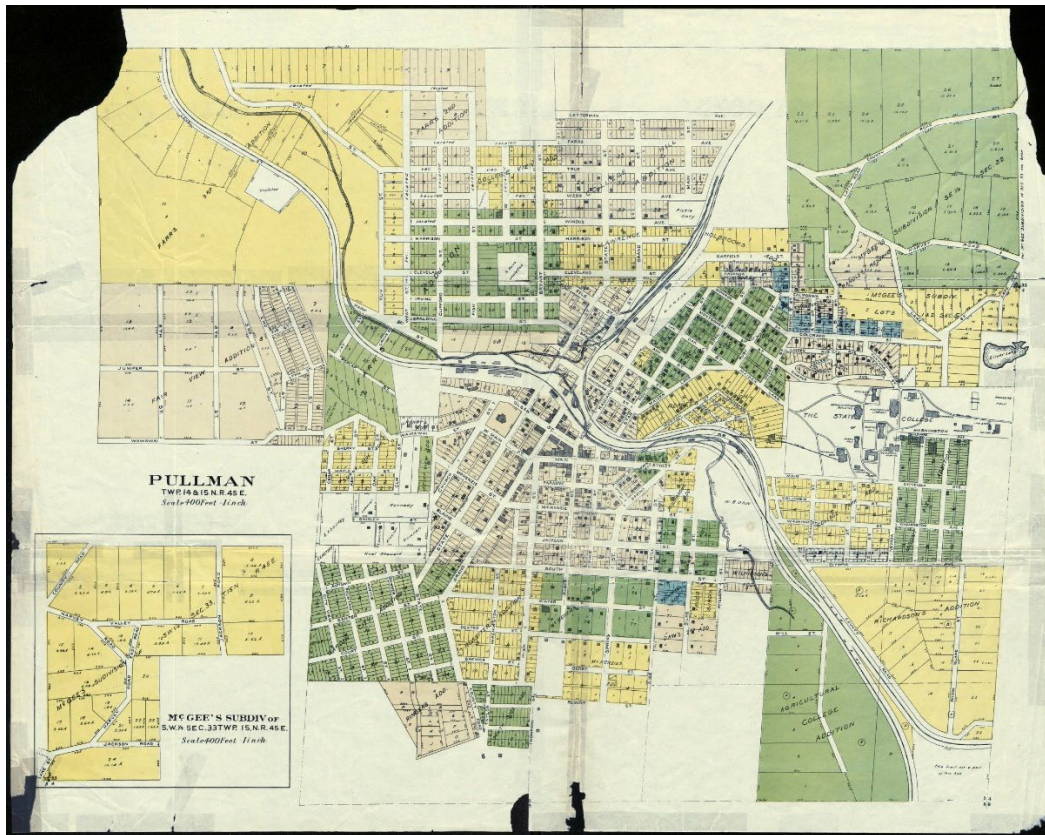
By the time the *Bensel's Pullman City Directory For the Year 1891* was published, the author was able to summarize the progress that the young city had made.<sup>72</sup> According to the directory, the city boasted an excellent water system, with nine artesian wells and a modern waterworks. It had a well-equipped fire department. Five arc lights lit the downtown. Institutions included a grade school, two churches, and two banks. The town hosted abundant social clubs, referred to as “secret societies” in this directory. The agricultural community was served by six large grain elevators and three agricultural implement stores; a flour mill was also in place. Visitors were served by three hotels and an opera house. In addition to three general merchandise stores were numerous specialty shops and services. Other opportunities for

<sup>72</sup> McLean, 1891.

employment included a planing mill and several carpenter shops. The directory made the point that there were only three saloons in Pullman.<sup>73</sup>

The founding of WSU, a land grant college, in 1890 would have a tremendous impact on the development of Pullman. The Morrill Act of 1862 authorized the creation of land-grant colleges. It was followed by the Hatch Act of 1887, which provided funds for the establishment of an agricultural experiment station at the colleges. Once Washington had obtained statehood, it pursued this opportunity and on March 28, 1890, it passed House Bill 90 for the creation of the *Agricultural College, Experimental Station and School of Science for the State of Washington*.<sup>74</sup> The bill stipulated that the college must be located in the southeast sector of the state. After a very competitive process, and even though a state agricultural college was located in Moscow, Idaho, just eight miles away, Pullman was chosen for the location. The college opened on January 13, 1892 with 59 students and a five-member Board of Regents. When it was awarded the college, the city's population was 868 people; by 1900 it was 1,308.<sup>75</sup> Today, according to one source, the university is "a major social, cultural and political influence, surpassing agriculture as the town's main source of growth."<sup>76</sup>

**Figure 12: Plat map of Pullman, 1910**



<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> "Washington State University," *Wikipedia*. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Washington\\_State\\_University](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Washington_State_University) accessed August 2023.

<sup>75</sup> McLean, 1891.

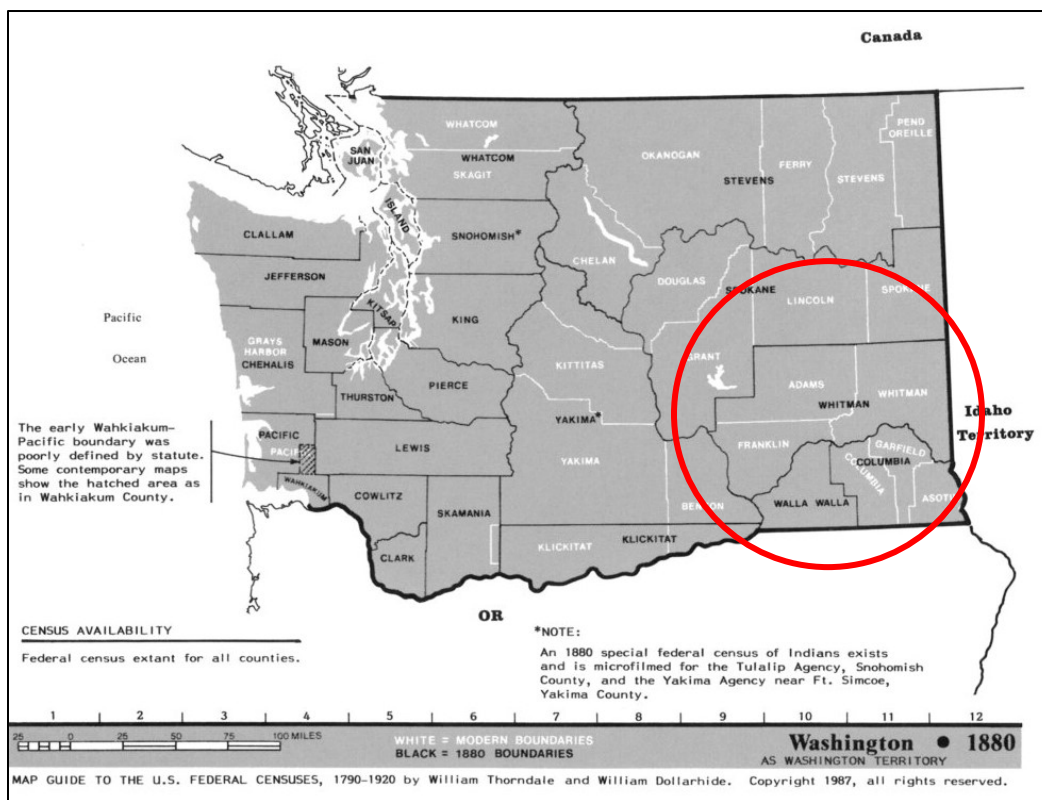
<sup>76</sup> Gaylord, 2000:77.

## Pullman's Chinese Residents

Washington became a territory in 1853; before that it was part of Oregon Territory. Whitman County was part of Spokane County, which extended into northern Idaho and northwestern Montana. Idaho became a territory in 1864. This same year Spokane County was renamed Stevens County. The region still had this configuration in 1870. In 1880 the Whitman County enumeration area encompassed what are today the counties of Whitman, Adams and Franklin. Whitman County was not enumerated separately from other nearby counties until 1890.<sup>77</sup> While the 1880 census provides interesting information about the Chinese population in Whitman County at that time, it is not correlated to a specific location, with the exception of the Chinese in the town of Colfax.

**Figure 13: Enumeration area for Whitman County in the 1880 census**

Source: Map Guide to the US Federal Census



The following is a summary of the Chinese in Pullman and other towns in Whitman County for the census years of 1880 through 1950, with follow-up data for 1970. A listing of the Chinese individuals in Whitman County appears in Attachment "A" to this report.

The 1880 census shows that 500 Chinese railroad workers were working in Whitman County within the geographic area called out as Whitman County in the census. The data showed the subject's name, how old they were, what they did, and their country of origin, but not where they lived with the following exceptions. Colfax, which was incorporated in 1879 and enumerated separately, shows that the Chinese living in Colfax in 1880 were employed as cooks, house enumerators, laborers, and worked in laundries. A

<sup>77</sup> Note that most of the 1890 census burned in a fire and no information from it is available for Washington State as a result.



separate record in Whitman County included three people who lived in Penawawa. They were employed as a miner, someone who washed clothes, and someone who kept a store. One person named Charley, who worked as a cook, was identified in Almota. A handful of other Chinese immigrants worked in unspecified locations in Whitman County as cooks or in a wash house. By far the majority of Chinese worked for the railroad.

In the 1900 census ten Chinese individuals appeared in the census in Pullman (the precincts were North Pullman and South Pullman). They were all male and ranged in age from 35 to 58. Most of them lived in a boarding house. The occupations listed included day laborers, cooks, and laundrymen. This is the first available census after passage of the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act.

In the 1910 census eighteen Chinese individuals living in Whitman County were listed, but none were specifically called out as living in Pullman.

**Figure 14: Chinese railroad workers in 1880 census of Whitman County**  
 Source: US Census, 1880

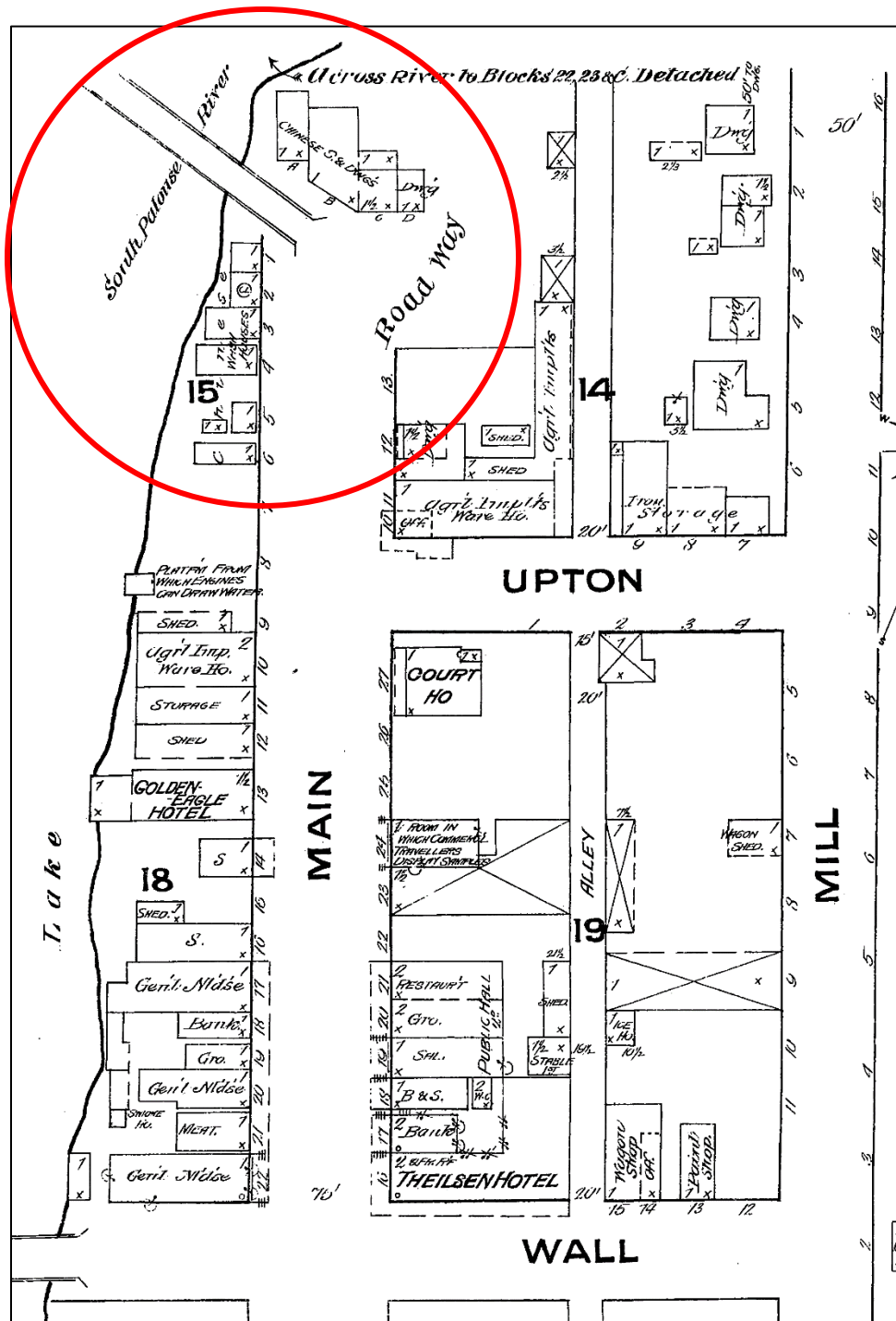
Page No. 21  
 Supervisor's Dist. No. 59  
 Enumeration Dist. No. 59

SCHEDULE I.—Inhabitants in \_\_\_\_\_, in the County of Whitman, State of Wash. Ter.  
 enumerated by me on the 22 day of June, 1880.

*Edw. Duff*

No. of Inhabitants	Name	Sex	Age	Color	Profession, Occupation, or Trade	Place of Birth	Married		Single		Total	
							Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
53	Ami Ah	M	34		RR laborer	China						
54	Ami Ah	F	34			China						
55	Ami Ah	F	34			China						
56	Ami Ah	F	34			China						
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**Figure 15: Colfax's Chinatown, Whitman County, 1884**  
Source: Sanborn Fire Insurance map



**Figure 16: Chinese vegetable vender in Whitman County**  
Source: Northwest Museum of Art and Culture



In the 1920 census eleven Chinese people were listed as living in Whitman County, including one in Pullman and the remaining in North Colfax (which is actually west Colfax), Almota, and Tekoa. The person in Colfax was a 26-year-old student who also held a job. He was associated with a white family; his father being an instructor at Washington State College (University today). The Chinese residents of North Colfax were listed as farmers or truck farmers. The residents of Almota were listed as fruit farmers. The individuals in Tekoa worked in a laundry and as a cook in a hotel. Two people were listed as laborers and one woman was married to one of the laborers.

In the 1930 census twenty-two Chinese were listed as living in Whitman County, fifteen of them living in Pullman. Most occupations were associated with the restaurant business, including one owner of a restaurant, several operators and waiters, a dishwasher, and a cook. Three individuals were students. This is the first census in which Chinese people were listed who were not born in China. Five people were variously born in California, Washington, New York, and the "United States." Most of the individuals lived in lodging houses, boarding houses, or a group home.

The 1940 census shows seventeen Chinese individuals living in Pullman and an additional eight in Tekoa. Quite a few people were born in Washington, appearing to indicate the formation of families, such as the Don Lee family. Don Lee owned and operated a grocery store, along with his wife. The two other large households in Pullman were café/restaurant owners and workers. Workers might include a manager, cooks, waiters, and dishwashers. Workers as well as family members might also live with the owners.

In the 1950 census all 36 Chinese residents are listed as living in Pullman; there were no Chinese residents listed in any of the other Whitman County towns. The workers were close to equally divided between those associated with the restaurant industry and those affiliated with the university, usually as students, although many students had jobs at the college as well. Restaurant workers were owners, operators, managers, cooks, and waiters. Residents (likely students) who had jobs at the university included a research assistant in agricultural economics, a research assistant in animal husbandry, an assistant chemist, a library attendant, and a worker in the dairy. One person worked as a janitor at the college. As was the case in 1940, there were more families so household members might be wives, sons and daughters. This is the first census that occurred after the 1943 repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Act and the first census of the post-World War II era.

In 1970 there were 295 Chinese residents in Whitman County and 60 in Pullman, most of whom were students. At the time of the 2020 census the population of Pullman was 32,508 people, with 12.0% being of Asian heritage and additional 7.7% being of two or more races.<sup>78</sup> WSU's enrollment was 31,159 students in 2020.<sup>79</sup>

## CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS

The takeover of mainland China by the communist government in 1949 had an effect on Chinese immigration to the US, in that it increased the numbers of Chinese – primarily from Taiwan and Hongkong – immigrating to the US.<sup>80</sup> It also had an effect on the character of that immigration. The fact that these immigrants were more likely to be urbanites and had expectations of social mobility, also made a difference, in contrast to earlier years when immigrants might come from the rural provinces of southern China and sought work as laborers. Another major change was that in contrast to earlier decades, when the Chinese may have immigrated to the US for work or educational opportunities but planned to return to China once they had achieved their goals, Chinese immigrants more commonly planned to stay in the

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<sup>78</sup> "QuickFacts, Pullman city, Washington," United States Census Bureau, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/pullmancitywashington/>, accessed August 2023.

<sup>79</sup> This included the main campus and all branch campuses.

<sup>80</sup> "A New Community," Immigration and Relocation in U.S. History. Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/classroom-materials/immigration/chinese/a-new-community/>, accessed August 2023.

US.<sup>81</sup> The attitude of Americans toward the Chinese, and hence the lives of Chinese Americans, changed when the US and China became allies during World War II.<sup>82</sup> A fourth postwar trend came about as a result of the 1965 passage of the Immigration and Naturalization Act, which equalized immigration quotas and encouraged the immigration of families, establishing certain priorities, and professionals.

The Civil Rights Movement, which has its origins among Blacks in the southern US, had an influence on Asian American and Chinese communities and other ethnic minority communities as well. Historian Matthew W. Klingle, who is with the Center for the Study of the Pacific Northwest at the University of Washington, writes that during this time minorities in Seattle's Central District banded together: "Asian Americans and African Americans had lived in close proximity for nearly six decades, community leaders crossed ethnic lines to fight together for public housing, tenant rights, election reform and employment opportunities."<sup>83</sup> In the early 1960s, this atmosphere of activism influenced Asian Americans by encouraging them speak out and ultimately to achieve leadership positions.

**Figure 17: Wing Luke reading a letter announcing he had won the City Council election**  
Source: "Wing Luke: A Life and Legacy Shaping Seattle"



<sup>81</sup> Erickson and Ng, 1989: 180.

<sup>82</sup> Roger Daniels, *Asian American, Chinese and Japanese in the United States since 1850*. Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1995 (1988):188.

<sup>83</sup> Matthew W., Klingle, *History Bursting With Telling: Asian Americans in Washington State*. Seattle, WA: Center for the Study of the Pacific Northwest, University of Washington Department of History, <https://www.washington.edu/uwired/outreach/cspn>, accessed June 2023:3 of 4. Note that by the 1930s the bulk of the Asian American community in Seattle lived in the International District. Restrictive covenants further limited the residential mobility of Asian Americans outside the International District. Property owners could not sell their land to non-whites. In contrast, the First Hill and Beacon Hill neighborhoods, where many Asian Americans lived, did not have covenants.



In western Washington, where the majority of Asian Americans live in Washington State, acceptance and assimilation of the Chinese as time went on played out in the political arena and would have implications in western Washington and beyond. In 1960 Wing Luke was elected to the Seattle City Council, the first Chinese American to be elected to office in a large US city on the mainland. In 1967, after his death, the Wing Luke Museum in Seattle was established in his honor. In 1973 Ruby Chow of Seattle was elected to the King County Council, the first Asian American and first woman of color to serve that body. Chinese American Gary Locke, who had been serving as the King County Executive, was elected the governor of Washington State in 1966, the first person of Chinese descent to be elected as governor in a US mainland state.<sup>84</sup> “Such victories were made possible by political coalitions that united Asian Americans of all orientations. In political as well as cultural terms. Asians began referring to themselves as Asian Americans, or Asian/Pacific Americans, reflecting an identity that transcended previous ethnic bonds.”<sup>85</sup>

### Post-war Pullman

Pullman's population exploded in the post-war era, as did the population in many west coast cities. Pullman's population was 4,417 people in 1940 and 12,022 in 1950, an increase of 172.2%. This was due in part to the influx of new students to WSU taking advantage of the Serviceman's Readjustment Act of 1944 or the GI Bill. The city's population remained relatively stable from 1950 to 1960 but increased again between 1960 and 1970, growing to 20,509, an increase of 58.3%. There were also changes in the post-

### Figure 18: Suburban growth in Pullman, 1966

Source: Northwest Museum of Art and Culture



<sup>84</sup> Locke would go on to serve as Secretary of Commerce and as Ambassador to China in the Obama administration.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

war era in where people lived, as the suburbs expanded. A third effect of growth in Pullman was the development of Grand Avenue and expansion of the commercial sector to serve the growing city.<sup>86</sup>

Growth was seen in the Chinese population in Pullman and Whitman County in this same time frame. The 1940 census reveals 17 Chinese residents in Pullman and a total of 25 in Whitman County. In 1970 the Chinese and Chinese American population in Pullman was 36 people, a growth rate of 211%, which is not equivalent to the population growth in Pullman as a whole in this time frame, but not insignificant. As noted above, this reflected workers in primarily the restaurant industry and workers and students at WSU. In 1970 there were 295 Chinese and Chinese American residents in Whitman County, 60 of which lived in Pullman. This is a growth rate of 166%, which at 170% is not that different from the growth rate of Pullman as a whole in the same time frame.

It should be noted, however, that there were important qualitative changes in how the Chinese and Chinese American residents of Pullman lived in the post-war era. A study of the census data from the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century shows that many Chinese immigrants lived in large households of relatives and others, as can be seen in the Oriental Café, where the second floor served as lodgings for the family, extended family, and employees of the café. After the passage of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, the nature of the population changed, including trends on household formation, and where they located. There were more families, who might live in single-family residences and in one case, an apartment building, and more students, who lived in group housing of various types, from fraternities to group homes to dormitories.

Changes in employment characterized the second (and third) generations of Chinese Americans. According to authors Edith Erickson and Eddy Ng, writing about the Inland Empire, many Chinese were still employed in or owned restaurants in the mid-century and beyond. They note that the *Lewiston Morning Tribune* wrote that there were eighteen Chinese or Asian food outlets in Lewiston, Idaho; Clarkston, Washington; Moscow, Idaho; and Pullman, Washington in 1986.<sup>87</sup> The newspaper also reported that the Pacific Coast region had the highest percentage of Oriental restaurants in 1986, there had been a 9.5 percent increase in the year 1985-86, and that entire families were often all employed in the business.

Despite the numbers, restaurant work represented only part of the Chinese' employment sector. Since 1965, Chinese immigrant and Chinese American communities have undergone tremendous change. Second generation Chinese Americans have attained higher levels of education and well-paying jobs and often moved to the suburbs. As Chinatowns emptied of the younger generation there was a tendency for them to become rundown.<sup>88</sup> This prompted revitalization efforts in some communities during the 1960s, such as Seattle, Portland and San Francisco. "Chinese American social activists, influenced by the social movements of the 1960s, focused their efforts on the social needs to the immigrant elders who remained in Chinatown neighborhoods."<sup>89</sup> In other places, however, decline prompted urban renewal efforts such as in Spokane and Santa Rosa, both of which cleared their Chinatowns with urban renewal funds. In the case of Pullman, however, which did not have a Chinatown, mid-20<sup>th</sup> century trends did not play out on the urban landscape.

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<sup>86</sup> Happy Avery, "Pullman — Thumbnail History," *HistoryLink.org*, September 24, 2015. <https://www.historylink.org/File/11116>, accessed April 2023.

<sup>87</sup> Edith E. Erickson and Eddy Ng, *From Sojourner to Citizen: Chinese of the Inland Empire*. Colfax, WA: 1989:178.

<sup>88</sup> "Chinese Americans in the Columbia River Basin - Historical Overview," Washington State University Libraries Digital Collection, <https://content.libraries.wsu.edu/digital/collection/cchml/>, accessed August 2023.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*

### Washington State University and the Chinese Community

Strong ties have developed over time between Washington State University and the Chinese community. Don and Julia Lee, who likely moved to Pullman in the 1930s, spent most of their careers operating Don's Midway Grocery.<sup>90</sup> They bequeathed a substantial gift to the WSU Foundation that has enabled the university to award over \$700,000 annually to students and equally divided between the colleges of Agricultural and Home Economics, Business and Economics, Education, Engineering and Architecture, and Veterinary Medicine.<sup>91</sup>

**Figure 19: Don and Julia Lee of Don's Midway Grocery**  
Courtesy Kevin Johnson



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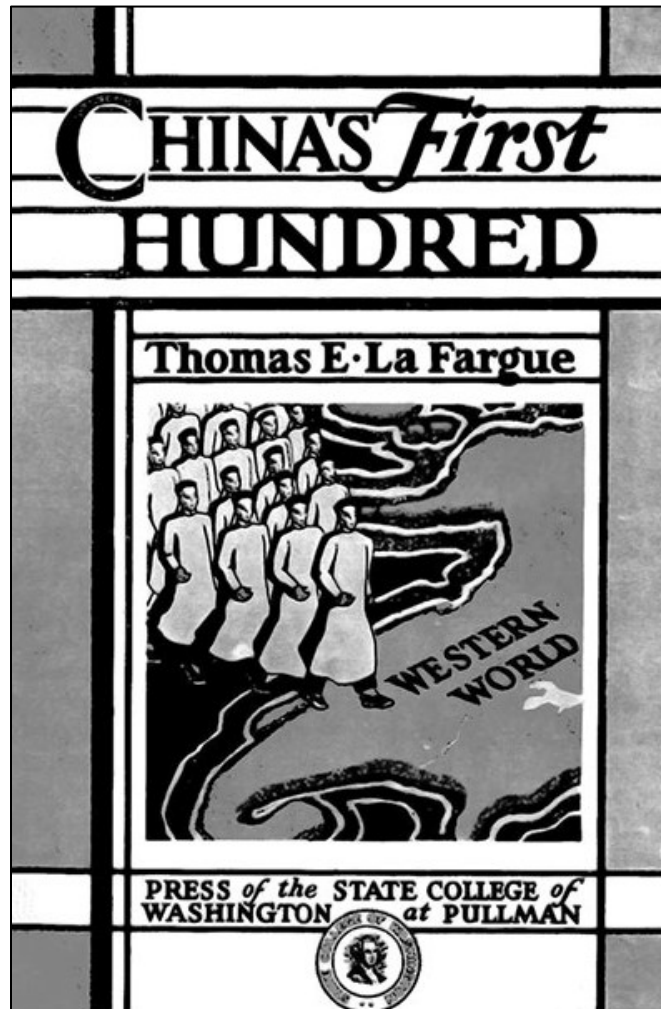
<sup>90</sup> Don Lee also advised people on their investments.

<sup>91</sup> Lee, Don and Julia Scholarship, CAHNRS Alumni & Development. <https://cahnrs.wsu.edu/alumni/scholarship-donor/don-and-julia-lee-scholarship/> accessed August 2023. This may not be the current name of the colleges, but is how it is noted on the WSU Foundation page.



Early scholarship on the Chinese students in the US was undertaken by Thomas E. LaFargue, a visiting professor to WSU in the early 1940s. LaFargue, a graduate of University of California Berkeley and Stanford University, wrote *China's First Hundred*, which was published by the State College of Washington at Pullman in 1942. *China's First Hundred* is a history of thirty young Chinese boys who, in 1872, began a ten-year period of education in colleges and technical institutions in the US, the first Chinese to receive an extensive education in Western technology and ideas.<sup>92</sup> The program was founded by Yung Wing, the first Chinese person to receive a Western education, having graduated from Yale University in 1854. The students who participated in the mission program (which was cancelled in 1881) were charged with studying mining and railway and telegraph development, knowledge they took back to China to help modernize the country. They also became naval officers and took a prominent part in the events leading to the Revolution of 1911.<sup>93</sup>

**Figure 20: 1942 book cover of Thomas LaFargue's *China's First Hundred***  
Source: *Washington State Magazine*, Fall 2021



<sup>92</sup> "China's First Hundred," WSU Magazine, <https://magazine.wsu.edu/web-extra-chinas-first-hundred/> accessed August 2023.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid. The Thomas La Fargue Collection, 1872-1954, is held at WSU.

An article on this publication appeared in the Fall 2021 issue of *Washington State Magazine*. The significance of this work was described as follows: “. . . LaFargue’s book was an important work in [the] field of Asian history, documenting the intriguing story of one of the most significant episodes in Chinese-American relations. Its relevance increased as social and economic contact restarted between China and the United States in the 1980s. WSU Press republished *China’s First Hundred* in 1987.”<sup>94</sup>

The Herbert and Katherine Wood Album on Chinese Students at WSU in the 1940s is a scrapbook of photos with autographs of Chinese students at WSU dating from the 1940s. The documents are in Chinese and English, and the collection includes an [undated] list of student names.<sup>95</sup>

In 1961, the Regents of WSU, which became a university in 1959, adopted a Ph.D. in American Studies, an interdisciplinary degree within the Departments of History and English in 1961-62. This program was the first doctoral program in American Studies in the Pacific Northwest and by 1975 it was only one of six programs west of the Mississippi.<sup>96</sup>

In 1967 Matsuyo Yamamoto (who was of Japanese heritage) was presented with the Regents Eighth Distinguished Alumnus Award, the first woman so honored. After receiving her degree in home economics in 1937 at then Washington State College, Yamamoto returned to Japan where she pioneered home economics extension programs, eventually overseeing a staff of 3,000 home advisors that served the rural populations of Japan and other Asian countries. The College of Agricultural, Human, and Natural Resource Sciences offers the Matsuyo Yamamoto Endowed Scholarship in her honor.<sup>97</sup>

In 1970 WSU had the distinction of having the only known “Chinese Club” in the college system in Washington.<sup>98</sup> In 1978 WSU established an Asian Americans Studies program. The stated purpose of the program was to help younger Americans understand the Asian American,<sup>99</sup> It has evolved over time, however. Today WSU’s Chinese studies program is housed in the School of Languages, Cultures, and Race within the College of Arts and Sciences. There are two dedicated faculty in the program, Weiguo Cao and Xinmin Liu, who are both Associate Professors. Cao holds a PhD from the University of Wisconsin, Madison, which he was awarded in 2016. He teaches classes on Chinese language and culture. Xinmin Liu holds a PhD in Comparative Literature from Yale, which he was awarded in 1997. He teaches Chinese and Comparative Cultures. He teaches in the Department of Foreign Languages and Cultures and in the American Studies and Culture graduate program.

Recent publications by those affiliated with WSU include, “How Chinese pioneers helped build the Pacific Northwest,” by Rebecca Phillips, which was published in the Fall 2021 issue of *Washington State Magazine*. Among those quoted in this article are J. Philip Gruen, an Associate Professor in WSU’s College of Design and Construction, and Eddy Ng, fourth generation Chinese American and part owner of Eddy’s Chinese and American Restaurant in Colfax. While he is fourth generation Chinese American, Ng immigrated to the US from southern China when he was a teenager. He is also the co-author, with Edith E. Erickson, of *From Sojourner to Citizen, Chinese of the Inland Empire*.

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<sup>94</sup> “China’s First Hundred,” *Washington State Magazine*, Fall 2021.

<sup>95</sup> Herbert and Katherine Wood via Thomas Kennedy, WSU Department of History, (ms) 1990. <https://archiveswest.orbiscascade.org/ark:80444/xv175964>, accessed August 2023.

<sup>96</sup> “Inspiring Washington, 125 years, and counting,” *Washington State University*. <https://timeline.wsu.edu/>, accessed August 2023.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> Art Chin, *Golden Tassels, A History of the Chinese in Washington, 1857-1977* (ms.). Seattle, WA: 1977. On file, Spokane Central Library Ned M. Barnes Northwest Room, accessed June 2023.

<sup>99</sup> Erickson and Ng, 1989:182.

## PEOPLE, BUILDINGS, AND BUSINESSES

### Early Resources

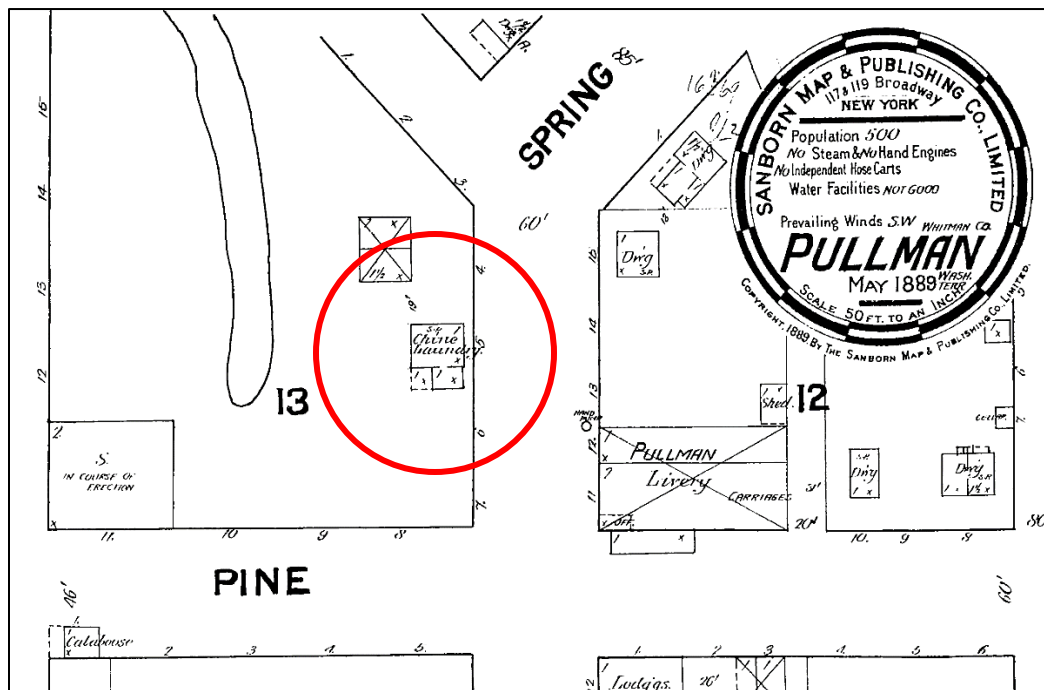
Typically, Sanborn Fire Insurance maps and other historical map resources can be relied on to provide information about historic buildings and will show every permanent building type. Sanborn maps are available in Pullman for the years 1883, 1891, 1893, 1896, 1908, 1929, and 1949. However, only four years of the Sanborn maps showed buildings associated with the Chinese community and they were all laundries. Three dates from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and one dates to sometime before 1949, which was a one-story laundry within a tin shop. None of these buildings survive today.

They are as follows:

- 5 Paradise, 1889 - 1-story building with covered overhang in NW corner; same in 1891 except overhang is gone. In 1893 building is vacant.
- 17 Grand, 1893 - Narrow 1-story building 3' off the ground, open to the ground, with stable at the back of lot. It was between a hall and a livery. Same in 1896.
- 45, 46 & 64 (no named street), 1896 – One-and-one-half story building with one-story overhangs, an open platform in back with stair access, and a separate one-story Chinese wash house (#64). Across from OR&N freight depot and behind the Hotel Pullman.
- 315 Paradise (235 SE Paradise today), 1949 - One-story laundry within a tin shop.

**Figure 21: Chinese laundry in Pullman, 1889**

Source: Sanborn Fire Insurance map



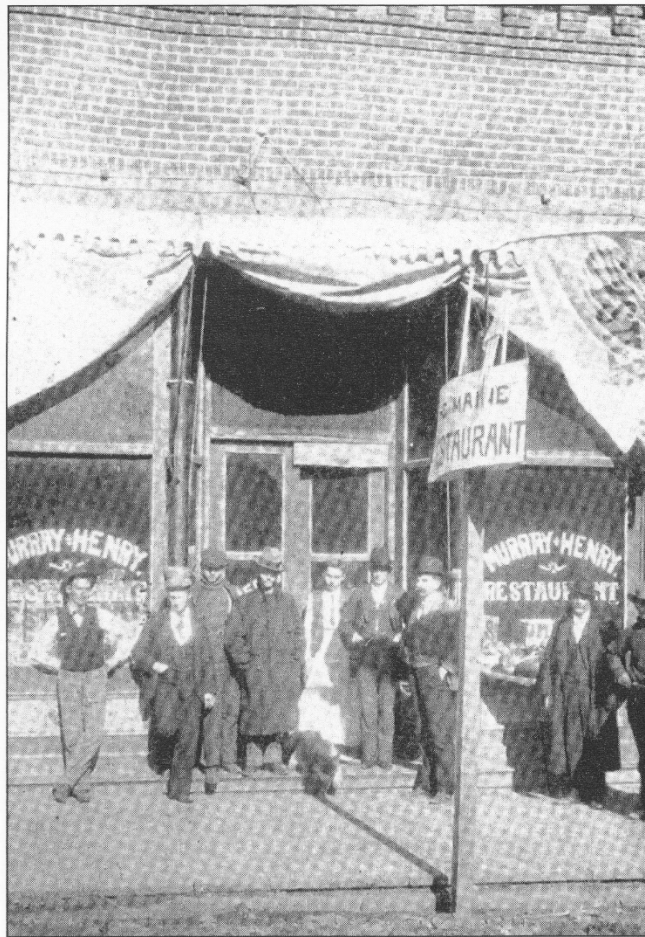
### People, Buildings, and Businesses

The following profiles three commercial buildings associated with two Chinese families in Pullman that are still extant. All three buildings currently house other businesses today but have long histories of association with the families that founded the businesses.

**The Oriental Café.** Charlie Kee Eng (also seen as Charlie Wong<sup>100</sup>) was the first proprietor of the Oriental Café, which he founded in 1920. According to an article in the *Spokane Daily Chronicle* Charlie Eng had farmed near Yakima, worked in Spokane, and operated a small restaurant in Lewiston before he moved to Pullman and opened the city's first Chinese restaurant.<sup>101</sup> After Charlie Eng died in World War II his son Tommy, 55 at the time, took over the business along with a cousin George. Tommy brought in his son Kenny and his wife Eleanor to help with the business.

### Figure 22: Henry-Murray Restaurant at 226 E. Main Street, ca 1900

Source: *Pullman* by Robert Luedeking, Whitman County Historical Society



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<sup>100</sup> Charlie Wong was the proprietor of the restaurant in 1930, according to Esther Smith, who chronicled Pullman's businesses from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century through 1993. Esther Pond Smith, "Pullman Business Directory: 1881-1993" (manuscript), Bunchgrass Historian, Pullman, WA: Whitman County Historical Society, Volume 50, No. 4, Summer 2023.

<sup>101</sup> "Former Dishwasher Opens New Pullman Restaurant," *Spokane Daily Chronicle*, October 18, 1967:6.

In 1925 the café moved to 226 E. Main Street. The building at 226 E. Main was built by Murray Henry in 1890-1891, where he ran a restaurant he called Murray-Henry Restaurant.<sup>102</sup> He added a second floor ca 1908.<sup>103</sup> Murray Henry operated the restaurant in this location until ca 1913, when he sold it to an unknown party. Tommy Eng bought the building in 1925; he would go on to own and operate the Oriental Café/Restaurant in Pullman for more than 50 years.<sup>104</sup>

**Figure 23: The Oriental Café at 226 E. Main Street (no date)**

Source: WSU Libraries Digital Collections



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<sup>102</sup> Robert Luedeking and the Whitman County Historical Society, *Pullman*. Charleston, South Carolina: Arcadia Publishing, 2010:18.

<sup>103</sup> Annie Doyon and Kathryn Burk-Hise, *Reconnaissance Survey for Downtown Pullman, Whitman County, Washington*. Prepared for the Pullman Historic Preservation Commission and Pete Dickinson, Planning Directory and Staff Liaison to the Commission. Prepared by A.D. Preservation, Historic Preservation & Historical Services. July 11, 2014:108.

<sup>104</sup> "Tommy S. Eng, 84, owned Oriental Restaurant," *Lewiston News Tribune*, July 9, 1997.



**Figure 24: The Oriental Café at 226 E. Main Street, interior, ca 1955**

Source: WSU Libraries Digital Collections



226 E. Main Street was surveyed as part of the 2014 *Reconnaissance Survey for Downtown Pullman, Whitman County, Washington*. It was described as follows. The building was found not eligible as a historic resource due to changes that had taken place to the ground floor of the building.

*Listing Status: Not Listed. Date: 1890. 226 E Main Street, Licks Unlimited Soups & Sweets (Restaurant, Confectionary, Tobacco & Soft Drinks). Characteristics: Two-story, brick, 1890 building with decorative brickwork including corbelling and brick lintels and sills. Replacement sashes and a nonhistoric awning are found on this building with changes to the fenestration on the first level. An air-conditioning unit is found above the entry. This was built with one story in 1890 with the second story added by 1908.*<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> Doyon, 2014: 57.



**Figure 25: 226 E. Main Street today (2023)**  
Photo by Diana Painter



**Figure 26: The Oriental Restaurant, 300 S. Grand Avenue (Thai Ginger today)**

Photo by Diana Painter



**The Oriental Restaurant.** The building at 300 S. Grand Avenue was the Oriental Restaurant's second location. This building was originally the Dissmore IGA. The building, Pullman's first supermarket, was constructed in 1940 by Guy Dissmore. That business occupied this site until 1956, when the owner moved the business to its next location on N. Grand Avenue.<sup>106</sup>

Tommy Eng renamed the Oriental Café the Oriental Restaurant and moved it into the old IGA building at 300 S. Grand Avenue, by then a building supply store, in 1967.

Tommy ran the family business until he retired to San Francisco. Ken Eng, along with his wife Ellie, joined the family business in 1967; his brother Albert joined it in 1972. They ran the business until 1984.<sup>107</sup> As expressed in the *Moscow-Pullman Daily News*, "A landmark business in downtown Pullman will close its doors at 8 tonight, bringing to a close a three-generation reign of Oriental restauranteers in Whitman County."<sup>108</sup>

The building was sold in 1988 and subsequently housed a number of businesses. Today it is the Thai Ginger Restaurant and Bar. After closing the Oriental Restaurant Albert Eng bought a McDonald's franchise at S. 1620 Grand Avenue. Ken later opened an Arby's Roast Beef Restaurant at 1686 S. Grand Avenue and Albert opened a second McDonald's in Pullman.

The Oriental Restaurant has not been previously surveyed. The commercial building was constructed in 1941. Sanborn Fire Insurance maps reveal that in 1929 the site was occupied by a single-family property,

<sup>106</sup> Luedeking, 2010:15, 36.

<sup>107</sup> Esther Pond Smith, "Pullman Business Directory: 1881-1993" (manuscript), Bunchgrass Historian, Pullman, WA: Whitman County Historical Society, Volume 50, No. 4, Summer 2023.

<sup>108</sup> Vera White, "The Oriental Changes Hands," *The Moscow-Pullman Daily News*, June 15, 1988:B1.



while by 1949 it was occupied by a large, roughly L-shaped commercial building of concrete block or concrete brick, with a smaller addition toward the rear of the lot that was concrete block. Today the large, one-story building has an infill wing, making it roughly rectangular in plan.

**Figure 27: Don’s Midway Grocery, 640 NE Maiden Lane**

Photo by Diana Painter



**Don’s Midway Grocery.** Don Lee of Don’s Midway Grocery, along with his wife Julia, established his grocery store at 640 NE Maiden Lane after moving to Pullman and operating a Chinese restaurant. In the 1940 census Don Lee was 32, his wife Julia was 28, and they had two daughters, aged 7. The Lees became acquainted with Carl Morrow, the Dean of Men at WSU in 1936, when Morrow regularly visited their restaurant. A photograph of the couple’s twins in WSC shirts given to them by Morrow is noted in WSU’s official timeline. Both of the Lee twins made their careers at WSU, Betty in the Agronomy department and Peggy with the Extension Service.<sup>109</sup> The Lees left a substantial donation to the WSU Foundation, which is used to award \$700,000 in scholarships in their names annually.

Don’s Midway Market, a two-story vernacular commercial building, was constructed in 1938. The building also houses eight apartments, located both above and below the ground floor retail space. The building is two stories on the front façade, with a variety of window types. Windows on the side facades are one-over-one-light, double-hung windows. A band of architectural detailing is located near the parapet on the

<sup>109</sup> “Lee twins sport their WSC shirts,” *Inspiring Washington, 125 years, and counting*, Washington State University. <https://timeline.wsu.edu/>, accessed August 2023.

flat-roofed building. The building appears in the state's Wisaard database, but it has not been the subject of a full survey.

The building was designed by architect Robert F. Rathjen and built in 1938.<sup>110</sup> Rathjen attended WSU on scholarship and graduated with a degree in Architectural Engineering. He had his own firm in Kirkland, Washington and specialized in designing churches.<sup>111</sup>

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended here that these three buildings be surveyed and evaluated for listing as local landmarks that commemorate the history of the Chinese community and the contributions of these two families, the Lees and the Engs, to the growth, development, and culture of Pullman.

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<sup>110</sup> "Property ID: 678583 Midway Grocery 640 NE Maiden Ln, Pullman, Washington, 99163." WISAARD (database). Olympia, WA: Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, accessed August 2023.

<sup>111</sup> "Robert F. Rathdrum Obituary," *The Everett Herald*, <https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/heraldnet/name/robert-rathjen-obituary>, accessed August 2023.

**Figure 28: Advertisement for the Oriental Café, ca 1962; Matchbook cover for the Oriental Café**





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## ATTACHMENT A –

### CENSUS RESEARCH FOR THE CHINESE IN PULLMAN

The following is a list of Chinese-born residents and Chinese Americans in Pullman drawn from the census for the years 1900 through 1950. Washington did not become a state until 1889. Prior to that time, it was Washington Territory, which was established in 1853. Pullman was incorporated as part of Washington Territory in 1888. All individuals were born in China unless otherwise stated.

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#### 1900 CENSUS

In 1900, four day laborers lived in a household in Pullman (no address listed). They consisted of Howsont (40), Sey Low (39), Gong Lee (57), and Ho Lee (51). Howsont was the head of household, while the other men were boarders.

In 1900 three Chinese residents lived in a large household of 13 people headed by Mark C. True and his wife Joanna, who were White (no address listed). The Chinese boarders were Charles Ho Dweng (39), a cook; Jino Sing (51), a cook; and Lewis Kue (56), a laundry man.

Hong Chung (50), lived alone and was a laundry man.

Gong Lee (34), lived alone and was a day laborer.

No other Chinese residents were listed in Pullman in 1900.

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#### 1910 CENSUS

Eighteen Chinese residents were listed in Whitman County in 1910, but none lived in Pullman.

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#### 1920 CENSUS

C. H. Lam, the 26-year-old son Howard and Anetta Hackedorn, lived at 501 Orlando Street (current address not found). He was a student and also worked. He was born in China, as was his mother and father. Lam was the only Chinese person listed in Whitman County who lived in Pullman in 1920. Other Chinese citizens lived in Colfax, Almota, Diamond, Garfield, St. John, and Tekoa.

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#### 1930 CENSUS

**226 E. Main Street.** The 1930 census identified a household living at 116 Main Street (226 E. Main Street housing "Licks" today) that was headed by Charlie Kee, who was 58 years old and had immigrated to the US in 1888. He lived with his three sons, Herbert (36), Tom (19) and Fred (18). Charlie operated a restaurant (the Oriental Café) and the two older sons worked as waiters (the youngest son had no profession). Three lodgers, Joe Eng (48), N.G. Chanti (35) and You Eng (37) were also listed as operators in a restaurant. Charlie Eng, a servant, was also listed as a waiter and another other lodger Chang Eng (16), had no profession. All the residents in this household beyond Charlie Kee immigrated in the 20th century. Five of the residents were married, including Charlie Kee, but no women were listed in the household.

**Campus Housing.** A Chinese student, Rudolph Hua Hei Louis (22) was living in the International House student housing on the WSU campus, addressed as 1605 C Thatuna Street Extension (NE Thatuna Street today; no equivalent address in 1930). Also living there was Kuang Yii Kuo (23), also a student.

**325** (a two-story house across from the former Northern Pacific train station) **and 335 NE Kamiaken Street.** This house was owned by George D. Ruchle and his wife Marian. It had twelve lodgers, several of which were students, including the three Chinese residents. The head of the household and his wife lived with two lodgers. An additional ten lodgers lived at 1107 Kamiaken. The Chinese lodgers were Ning A Hing (36), the owner of a restaurant; Dong Lee (24), a cook in a restaurant; and Lam Wong (18), a dishwasher in a restaurant.

The house at 325 NE Kamiaken Street is much changed, with at least three additions and an enclosed porch. The house at 335 NE Kamiaken displays asbestos shingle siding, an enclosed porch, and vinyl windows. Both appear to still function as apartments.

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## 1940 CENSUS

**226 E. Main Street.** The building at 116 Main Street (226 E. Main Street today) is discussed above. In the 1940 census Tommy Eng (30) was the head of the household and is also listed as the manager of a café (the Oriental Café). Tom Eng was born in San Francisco. Also living there was his brother Frederick Eng (28), a cook; Yick Dong Eng, (36), a cousin and cook; and George Kai (41), a cook; Lee Yuey (26), a dishwasher; Fook Poon Edward Eng,(25) a waiter; Will Dick (32), a cook; and Eng Yen George (43), a waiter. All but Tommy Eng's relatives were listed as lodgers. All residents but Tommy Eng were from China. According to a 1962 advertisement in the phone book the restaurant at 226 E. Main Street, the Oriental Café, was established in 1920.

**315 Paradise Street.** Charlie Wing (56), appears to have lived at 315 Paradise Street. Wing was an American citizen who had lived in China but had been born in Oregon; he had most recently relocated from Tacoma to Pullman. 315 Paradise was a wood-working shop in 1929. In 1949 it was a Chinese laundry located within a tin shop, according to the Sanborn Fire Insurance map. Today the site is occupied by the Pullman Building Inspection office and other government offices at 325 SE Paradise Street.

**300 S. Grand Avenue.** She Ming Wong (41) lived at 630 Grand Avenue (300 S Grand Avenue today). He was the head of the household and was part owner of a café. All other members of the household were also part owners. His brother She Ton Wong (48); cousin Kouch Yune Wong (29); and cousin Tung Wong (61) lived with him. Two of them had most recently lived in Spokane. In 1929 this property was a single-family house close to the intersection of Grand Avenue and McKenzie. In 1949 it was a large commercial building of concrete block or brick with a small concrete block addition on the McKenzie Street side. This building houses the Thai Ginger Restaurant and Bar today.

**640 NE Maiden Lane.** Don's Midway Grocery at 1412 Maiden Lane is located at 640 NE Maiden Lane today. In the 1940 census Don Lee, who was from China, was 32 and the head of the household and owner and operator of his grocery store, along with his wife Julia (28). Children Peggy and Betty (both 7) were also living there; his wife and children were from Washington State. The Lee family ran the grocery store for 50 years, according to locals. They left a large endowment to WSU, which allowed to university to establish a scholarship in their name.<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>112</sup> "Don and Julia Lee Scholarship Fund, *Washington State University*, <https://financialaid.wsu.edu/scholarship/don-and-julia-lee-scholarship-fund/>, accessed August 2023.

## 1950 CENSUS

**226 E. Main Street.** The building at 116 Main Street (226 E. Main Street today) is discussed above. George Y. Eng (53) was the head of the household and manager of a restaurant (the Oriental Café). The household was made up of Gum Chung Ng (38), Guk Yen Ng (48), George K. Eng (53), Loan Chang Loak (58), and Ho Joe Eng (72). All but the latter person were listed as working in the restaurant and were named as partners.

**545 SE High Street.** In 1950, Fred Dor Eng (35) was the head of the household at 401 High Street (545 SE High Street today). He was a cook and the owner of a restaurant. Also living with him was Jau Lee Eng (24), his wife, and Donald K. (1), his son. This is a single-family residence.

**820 NE C Street.** May O Chin (21), a lodger from China, lived at 1708 C Street (820 NE C Street today) with what appears to be a group of other students. He had previously lived in Yakima. His mother was from China and his father was from the US. He had US citizenship. The head of household, Harold R. Wilson (26), was a teacher and educator at a private college. This is the Valhalla Bar & Grill today.

**930 NE D Street.** Chang Yong Chang (31) was a lodger who lived in a household owned by John Snyder at 1806 D Street (930 NE D Street today). Chang Yong Chang was a janitor at the college. This is a single-family residence today.

**1225 NE Stadium Way.** A household at 1002 Stadium Way (1225 NE Stadium Way today) was headed by Shas-er Ong (32). Also in the household were his wife Li-hwa (25) and Amy Heng-Che, a child under 1, who were born in Washington. The father was a research assistant in agricultural economics at Washington State College (University today). The-Cheng Huang, who also lived at the house, was a research assistant in animal husbandry at the college. This is a single-family residence.

**Fraternity House.** Hong C. Shik (29), a student and Chinese lodger from Korea, lived in a fraternity with numerous other students and some workers.

**Campus Housing.** Foo G. Chin (19) was working in the dairy at Washington State College in 1950. He was living in a dormitory on campus with numerous other students.

**Campus Housing.** Diana Young (24) was a lodger in a household owned by Robert J. Bartow. She worked doing housework in private homes.

**405 NE Oak Street.** Chao Moh (29) was the head of household at 301 Oak Street (405 NE Oak Street today). He lived there with his wife Edith (33). He was a research assistant at WSC, as was his wife, who was a research assistant in chemistry. The building at 405 NE Oak Street is a three-story brick apartment building.

**507 Campus.** Hsin P. Chang (27) was living with Clinton O. Michaelson (23), a stated partner and Industrial Research Laboratory Assistant, were living in a sorority at "507 Campus," according to the census.

**Campus Housing.** Kim Huey (27) was living with his wife Edith Huey (26) and sister-in-law Margaret Pang (22) (all Chinese in ethnicity but Edith and Margaret were born in Washington). Kim was a cook in a restaurant, Edith was a chemistry assistant at the college, and Margaret was a library attendant at the college. It appears that they lived in student housing.

**500 NE Oak Street.** Stanley E. Woo (31) lived at 400 Oak Street (500 NE Oak Street today) with his wife Alice W. Woo (24). Stanley was a cook at a restaurant.

**340 W. Main Street.** Tommy E. Eng (38) lived at 310 W. Main (340 W. Main today) with his wife Ealen (38). Also living with them were his sons Kenneth (12), Albert (2) and Robert, (1) and cousin Jack (37), cousin-in-law Janet (31), and their son Phillip (1). Tommy owned and operated a Chinese restaurant (the Oriental Café) and Jack was a waiter in a restaurant. This is a single-family house.

**Campus Housing.** Lawrence Eng (19) was a research assistant at WSC and lived in a group home, likely on campus.

**760 NE Reaney Way.** Jean (who was white) and Luther F. Chew, who was Chinese and from Canton, China, married in 1954 and moved to Pullman in 1956 when Luther took a job with the WSU Libraries. They lived at 1502 Reaney Way (760 NE Reaney Way today), close to campus. Jean also worked with the WSU libraries later in her career, as a computer systems analyst. Luther and Jean divorced, likely in the mid-1960s, after which he relocated. He served as the Librarian of the Audio-Visual Center at WSU from 1956 to 1966. Luther, who held a Bachelor of Arts degree in Librarianship from the University of Washington, later took a job as the head of the Information and Orientation Services Division at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver.<sup>113</sup> He died in British Columbia in 2009.<sup>114</sup>

**No address.** James Leong Way (1926-2023), who was from Watsonville, California, moved to Pullman with his family in 1967, where he took a job as a professor in Pharmacology from 1967 to 2002. He was an expert in cyanide toxicity and finished his career serving in an endowed chair at Texas A&M University for 20 years.<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> "Information and Orientation Services Division," *University of British Columbia Library Bulletin*, Vancouver, B.C., No. 4, June 24, 1968.

<sup>114</sup> "Luther Chew," *Tribute Archive*, <http://www.tributearchive.com/obituaries/28045712/luther-chew>, accessed August 2023.

<sup>115</sup> "Dr. James Leong Way," *Dignity Memorial*, <https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/san-francisco-ca/james-way-11280558>, accessed August 2023.

## ATTACHMENT B -

### THE CHINESE IN WHITMAN COUNTY'S SMALL TOWNS

The following is a brief description of the towns in Whitman County (with the exception of Pullman) with their populations in 1880 (where available), when the Chinese population in Whitman County was at its height, and its population in 1890, a period of intense Euro-American settlement in Whitman County.<sup>116</sup> The 1880 census for Whitman County notes that the nearly 500 Chinese people in the county were employed as railroad laborers, but the location of the workers was not stated. This can probably be explained by the fact that the railroad workers were working throughout the county and not fixed to a specific locale.

The list is organized by founding and/or incorporation date of the towns, as available, beginning with Almota (surveyed in the late 1870s, no longer extant) and ending with Malden (1909). This is followed by a discussion of the role the Chinese played in the towns' development. Whitman County itself was established in 1871 and occupies 2,178 square miles today. It was partitioned from what was Stevens County in 1870, which included most of northern Washington east of the Cascades at that time.

#### **Almota**

Almota, no longer extant, was a busy port on the Snake River by which settlers arrived via wagon from Walla Walla. Once a Federal land office was opened in Colfax, Almota Landing was crowded with future settlers and their wagons, plows, and threshers. Merchandise also arrived via cable ferry. Eventually it would be served by the OR&N railroad. It was surveyed for a townsite in the late 1870s and a post office, which closed in 1961, was established in 1878. Today Almota is known only for its large grain elevator, which is located on the site of the original town and terminal.

The 1880 census notes one Chinese member of the community at that time, a cook named Charley. Almota had a "China House," in which Chinese workers were housed, but historian Phil Dougherty did not note what type of work they were doing. In nearby Wawawai they were working in the orchards and also housed in a "China House."<sup>117</sup>

#### **Palouse**

The town of Palouse, on the Palouse River, supplied the gold miners from Idaho's Gold Hill and the Hoodoo district of Idaho in the 1880s and 1890s.<sup>118</sup> It was first settled in 1869 and the townsite was established in 1875. The town had a population of 148 in 1880 that grew to 1,119 in 1890. Initially a stock-raising area, it began to convert to wheat farming and timber harvesting in the 1870s. The town was served by two branch railroad lines in the late 1800s. It became a timber center when Weyerhaeuser bought out local businesses and established a subsidiary there, the Potlatch Lumber Company, in 1903. In 1906, however, Potlatch (the company) moved to Potlatch, Idaho (the town) and phased out the Palouse facility, closing its sawmill in 1910.

A few Chinese businessmen operated laundries and small shops that were patronized by the whole community.<sup>119</sup> Due to the mining industry, the region was populated by Chinese miners. One violent incident occurred when three Chinese placer miners were robbed and murdered twelve miles east of Palouse.<sup>120</sup> A perpetrator was identified and tried but acquitted.

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<sup>116</sup> Note that census figures for the various towns were obtained from Wikipedia.

<sup>117</sup> Note that the orchards in Wawawai were inundated by the waters created by the Lower Granite Dam.

<sup>118</sup> Gaylord, 2000:66.

<sup>119</sup> Gaylord, 2000:67.

<sup>120</sup> Gaylord, 2000:66. The accused perpetrator was tried but acquitted.



## Colfax

Colfax represented an urban center in mostly rural Whitman County in 1880. It was the only town that was enumerated in the 1880 census separately from the county as a whole.<sup>121</sup> A federal land office was established there in 1876 and the town was incorporated in 1879. According to author Mary Gaylord, it was the first of the communities in Palouse Country to have a general store, grist mill, and post office.

The arrival of the Northern Pacific Railroad in 1884 connected Colfax to Walla Walla, Spokane Falls, and Moscow, with stage lines connecting Colfax to Palouse City and Pomeroy.<sup>122</sup> The Sanborn Fire Insurance map from this same year shows that the town had all the facilities necessary to provide for a growing center; the population jumped from 444 people in 1880 to 1,649 in 1890. Employment was provided by a flour mill, a saw and planing mill, a brewery, and implement sales. There were numerous general merchandise stores, as well as specialty shops and services. In addition to the County Courthouse and banks, it had several hotels. The town even had an opera house!

The 1880 census shows that the Chinese living in Colfax were employed as cooks, house servants, laborers, and worked in laundries. The 1884 Sanborn Fire Insurance map of Colfax shows a four-unit building on the Palouse River that housed a Chinese shop and dwellings. Nearby were wash houses, although they were not identified specifically as Chinese laundries. Not shown were the Chinese gardens located west of town, cared for by a group of ten or twelve Chinese.<sup>123</sup> Author Mary Gaylord, who has documented the Chinese and other pioneers in Eastern Washington between 1860 and 1910, named six Chinese men who resided in Colfax in 1880. She notes that after the coming of the railroad, Colfax's Chinatown developed further, mostly around Main and Canyon Streets. Gambling houses, houses of prostitution and opium dens also appeared. No organized violence was recorded against the Chinese in Colfax, although Gaylord notes that a 'generalized harassment' occurred, attributed in part to a perception on the part of Euro-American settlers that business was being taken away by the Chinese.

## Farmington

The small town of Farmington is located close to the Idaho border and represents a place where the farmland joins the forested foothills. Early settlers, including many Russian Germans, grazed cattle. A shingle mill was established there in the early years, as well as an apple packing plant, which did not survive after the harsh winters of the 1890s. It was laid out in 1878 and incorporated in 1888.

In 1889, a branch of the OR&N reached Farmington, connecting it by rail rather than wagon to Almota Landing. When the Union Pacific acquired the line in 1887, Farmington was also connected to Omaha and Portland. In 1890, a branch of the Northern Pacific also reached Farmington. The town grew rapidly when it became Union Pacific's regional headquarters.<sup>124</sup> This is reflected in census numbers; Farmington had a population of 76 people in 1880 and 418 in 1890.

Chinese laundries in two different locations on Washington Street can be seen on the 1888 Sanborn Fire Insurance map for Farmington, which provided employment for seven or eight Chinese families.<sup>125</sup> When the Chinese laid the railroad tracks to Farmington, local businessmen circulated a petition stating that if the Union Pacific continued to hire Chinese workers, freight into and out of Farmington would be consigned to the Northern Pacific. The Union Pacific later moved their regional headquarters to Tekoa.

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<sup>121</sup> Note that what are today the counties of Franklin, Adams, and Whitman were enumerated as Whitman County in 1880.

<sup>122</sup> Meinig, 1995:330-331.

<sup>123</sup> Gaylord, 2000:35.

<sup>124</sup> Union Pacific's facilities were moved to Tekoa in the 1920s.

<sup>125</sup> Gaylord, 2000:50.

## **Tekoa**

The small town of Tekoa was served by the Milwaukee railroad, symbolized by a long, high steel train trestle on the north edge of the community. It was also served by the OR&N when that company built a branch line to the community in 1908. It was also on the line to Spokane Falls, later acquired by the Union Pacific. It was additionally served by two branch lines, one to the mining district in Wallace, Idaho and another to the western Palouse.<sup>126</sup> Tekoa was first settled in 1886 and incorporated in 1889. Its population was 301 in 1890, 717 in 1900, and 1694 in 1910.

Laying lines into Tekoa coincided with the height of anti-Chinese sentiment in the Pacific Northwest, due to a slowing economy and the perception that the Chinese were taking jobs from white railroad workers. As a result, in February 1888 the residents ordered all Chinese to leave town, within a few hours. They were directed to go to Farmington, the origin of the branch line for the OR&N being graded by Chinese workers. One worker was lynched, when he unwittingly tried to apply for a job where a sign said (in English), "No Chinese Need Apply."<sup>127</sup>

Tekoa became the regional headquarters for the railroad after their move from Farmington. The town thrived in the 1890s and early 1900s as a center for grain shipping. Despite the anti-Chinese feelings in the late 1880s, a few Chinese railroad workers stayed, becoming engaged in truck gardening, manual labor, and laundry work.<sup>128</sup>

## **Oakesdale**

The town of Oakesdale, which was incorporated in 1890, became the center of another wheat-growing area in Whitman County. It was served by two railroads, the Northern Pacific and the Winona branch of the OR&N. It was a thriving town with an active business district by the time it was profiled in the 1901 *Illustrated History of Whitman County*.<sup>129</sup> The town had a population of 528 in 1890 and 928 in 1900. Today it has an estimated population of 439.

As was the case in other small towns in Whitman County, once the railroads and/or telegraph lines were completed, the Chinese workers often migrated to more larger cities with more urban centers, which provided them with more employment opportunities and likely more community. A few Chinese residents in Oakesdale were recorded by the time of the Geary Act of 1895 surveyed registered Chinese residents in the community.<sup>130</sup>

## **LaCrosse**

The railroad reached LaCrosse in 1888 and the townsite of LaCrosse was platted in 1902. The area was first used to graze horses and cattle, and then for farming. After the arrival of the railroad the town developed rapidly. The first available census number in LaCrosse is 1930, when the town had a population of 471. It now has a population of about 320. A section line, serving LaCrosse, was constructed by the Chinese from 1890 to about 1897.<sup>131</sup>

## **Malden**

The small town of Malden got its start as a railroad town in 1906, when the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul branch line was put in place to serve the wheat industry. It had an operation office, roundhouse, and

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<sup>126</sup> Gaylord, 2000:84.

<sup>127</sup> Gaylord, 2000:85.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid.

<sup>129</sup> W.H. Lever, *An Illustrated History of Whitman County, State of Washington*. Lever, W.H., Publisher, 1901.

<sup>130</sup> Gaylord, 2000:62.

<sup>131</sup> Gaylord, 2000:56.

maintenance and repair shops there. The town, which was incorporated in 1909, thrived until these rail facilities moved elsewhere in the 1920s.<sup>132</sup> The town had a population of 798 in 1910, 1,005 in 1920, and 375 in 1930.

White railroad workers in Malden felt that they had been replaced by lower-paid Chinese workers, which caused general prejudice against the Chinese. The history of the town is marred by the lynching of a Chinese worker who unknowingly applied for a job where a sign read (in English) "No Chinese Allowed."

On September 7, 2020, a large wildfire destroyed approximately 80 percent of buildings in Malden and nearby Pine City. Malden now has an estimated population of 206.

As had been seen, every small town in Whitman County had its own character. Few were influenced by the discovery of gold as resulting influx of Chinese miners, even insofar as acting as a supply point.<sup>133</sup> Palouse City acted as a point of departure to the mine fields in Idaho, but this trend was not seen in the other towns in Whitman County, which were primarily agricultural. Some towns saw Chinese railroad workers for the period of time that the railroads were either being constructed or had a facility within its borders, such as Farmington, Tekoa, and later, Pullman. Colfax appears to be the only town with a 'real' Chinatown in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Other towns, such as Almota and to a lesser degree LaCross and Malden, no longer hosted a Chinese community once it lost its main function. Pullman in turn had its own individual character with respect to its Chinese community over time, due to its own unique history, as will be seen.

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<sup>132</sup> Gaylord, 2000:60.

<sup>133</sup> Palouse City acted as a point of departure to the mine fields in Idaho, but this trend was not seen in the other towns in Whitman County, which were primarily agricultural.