

CHINESE PIONEER TIMELINE

Coming to California: Initially most Chinese came to Gum Sahn (Gold Mountain) for two reasons: 1) the gold rush of 1850 attracted people from all over the world, and 2) to escape the turmoil of the Taiping Rebellion which raged in China from 1850-1864. Most Chinese in San Luis Obispo County came from the south coastal Chinese province of Guang Dong.

- 1849 Census figures list 48 Chinese in San Francisco (50 total in the US)
- 1850 Census figures list 3,000 Chinese in San Francisco.
- 1852 25,000 Chinese in SF. 1852 till 1890 Chinese are the largest minority, making up 10% of California's population.
- 1856-1866 5,000-6,000/yr arrive in San Francisco (Wong On [Ah Louis] arrives to dig gold).
- 1867 Pacific Mail Steamship Co. established regular runs between Hong Kong and SF with an all-Chinese crew.
- 1868 Burlingame Treaty opens immigration between US and China.
- 1870-1883 12,000/yr arrive in San Francisco. Other main ports of entry included Los Angeles and Seattle.

In 1873 a depression hit California brought about by a surplus of labor and low wages. Looking for a scapegoat, most Californians blamed the Chinese. Here were people who ate different food, spoke a different language, dressed differently, and had different cultural ways. It was most likely a fear of the unknown that caused California and eventually the US to turn against their own Chinese Pioneers.

Chinese Pioneer Economy	Laws Discouraging Chinese Pioneers	Prejudice in San Luis Obispo Co.
<p>1856 1st record of California Chinese gathering abalone for export to China.</p> <p>1850-1880 China was 3rd largest foreign market for San Francisco.</p> <p>Most Important Chinese Imports: Tea (\$1.5 mil/yr), silk, rice (\$1 mil/yr), opium (\$800,000+/yr), and sugar.</p> <p>Most Important Exports to China: gold & silver, flour, ginseng, mercury, dried seafood (\$400,000 - \$5 mil/yr included fish, squid, abalone, shrimp, seaweed).</p> <p>20-30 Chinese import/export firms in San Francisco.</p> <p>1880-1900 Mining declined, opium was made illegal, less demand on rice due to ban on immigration, dried seafood increased and included abalone shell.</p> <p>Only 6 Chinese import/export firms remain in San Francisco.</p>	<p>1850 Foreign Miners Law set a high price for licenses and limited their number.</p> <p>1862 Chinese Coolie Trade forbidden.</p> <p>1870-77 Republicans, Democrats and Grange organization adopt resolutions against the Burlingame Treaty.</p> <p>1879 Calif. governor called special election on immigration; vote was 883 for and 154,638 against (only 5 voters in SLO county supported Chinese immigration).</p> <p>1881 Opium smoking was made illegal in California.</p> <p>1882 Chinese Exclusion Act cut off immigration and denied Chinese the right to become US citizens.</p> <p>1888 Scott Act: any Chinese who returned to China could not return to the US.</p> <p>1892 Geary Act: All Chinese legally in US must carry certificates of residence.</p> <p>1905 Calif. bans export of dried shrimp.</p>	<p>1879 San Miguel: Chin Lee was taken from his home and "accidentally shot". Coroner's jury decided no one to blame but the Chinaman.</p> <p>1879 SLO City passes law to remove Chinese laundries from Higuera Street.</p> <p>1880 All Chinese Leave San Miguel</p> <p>1880 SLO City tries to pass law forcing Chinese laundries out of town.</p> <p>1883 SLO City raises Chinese laundry business license fee prompting strike.</p> <p>1886 Arroyo Grande whites force Chinese to leave town under threat of hanging.</p> <p>1886 SLO City: Anti-Chinese businessmen form the "Caucasian Steam Laundry" to compete with Chinese laundries.</p> <p>1894 SLO City: An attempt is made to blow up Sam Lee's Adobe Laundry.</p>