
Bibliographic Essay for “The Chinese as Railroad Workers after Promontory”

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*Due to space limitations, many of the end notes in “The Chinese as Railroad Workers after Promontory” by Shelley Fisher Fishkin in *The Chinese and the Iron Road: Building the Transcontinental*, edited by Gordon H. Chang and Shelley Fisher Fishkin (Stanford University Press, 2019), had to be significantly truncated. This bibliographic essay supplements the references cited in the print essay. It also adds some material that had to be cut due to space constraints. After briefly summarizing “The Chinese as Railroad Workers after Promontory,” it extends and complements—but does not replicate—the citations in the print essay. (This bibliographic essay does not represent a complete inventory of sources used.) The number of the end note in the book that is being amplified here follows at the end of each paragraph or section in square brackets.*

*[Note: A version of “The Chinese as Railroad Workers after Promontory” that is twice as long as the one in *The Chinese and the Iron Road* and that integrates much of the information in this bibliographic essay was published in Chinese in 北美鐵路華工：歷*

史、文學與視覺再現 [*Chinese railroad workers in North America: Recovery and representation*], edited by Hsinya Huang [黃心雅] (Taipei: Bookman [台北: 書林出版社], 2017). See Shelley Fisher Fishkin, 從天使城到長島: 美洲橫貫鐵路竣工後在美國的鐵路華工 [*From Los Angeles to Long Island: Chinese railroad workers in America after the transcontinental*], in the volume edited by Hsinya Huang noted above, pp. 33-96.

“The Chinese as Railroad Workers after Promontory” is the first study of Chinese railroad workers in the United States in the two decades after the completion of the first transcontinental railroad. During that period, 1869 to 1889, the number of railroad lines in the United States more than tripled (Donald B. Robertson, *Encyclopedia of Western Railroad History*, vol. 2 [Dallas, TX: Taylor Publishing, 1991, 37]). The role of Chinese workers in this construction boom has not been examined previously in any depth.

“The Chinese as Railroad Workers after Promontory” demonstrates that the Chinese played key roles in this frenzy of railroad construction not just in the West, the Northwest, and the Southwest (as well as Canada), but also in the South, the Midwest, and even the Northeast. I found a paper trail for Chinese workers building and rebuilding railroads in Alabama, Arizona, California, Colorado, Georgia, Idaho, Louisiana, Maryland, Minnesota, Montana, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Washington, Wisconsin, and Wyoming. There were also reports of Chinese workers being contracted to work on rail lines in Indiana, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, and West Virginia, but there is no evidence that they actually showed up in these states. I have limited my discussion here to lines on which they actually worked—with one exception (see the discussion of the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad below). The locations of rail lines discussed in the essay were often known by different names during the period in which the railroads were built, such as Dakota Territory and Washington Territory; however, throughout the essay I describe locations according to the names by which they are known today. The essay documents what the Chinese workers did and where, what they did when the terms of their contracts were violated, what hazardous conditions they were exposed to, what forms of hostility they encountered, and what they accomplished. A list of rail lines on which the Chinese worked, as documented in the essay, and when they worked on them is given in Appendix A. [n5]

The essay drew on thousands of digitized newspaper articles from the period from a range of databases, including the Online Archive of California, 19th Century US Newspapers, America’s Historical Newspapers, American Periodicals Series, Genealogybank.com, NewsBank, the American Antiquarian Society, Newspapers.com, NewspaperArchives.com, and digitized

archives of individual titles. In many cases the same article was reprinted in multiple publications across the country, but only one source was given in the notes in the print version of this essay. Because these multiple printings testify to the broad interest in the topic of Chinese railroad workers throughout the nation, I include a brief discussion of them at the end of this bibliographic essay. A list of the contemporary newspapers and periodicals consulted is given in Appendix B. [n1, n3, n13, n18, n42, n44, n50, n53, n57, n85, n94, n95, n160, n187, n189, n205]

Some of the lines on which the Chinese worked—such as the Alabama and Chattanooga and the Utah, Idaho, and Montana—were abandoned for lack of funds or went bankrupt while they were still under construction. But Chinese work on unfinished lines sometimes had an impact on other lines. For example, the Utah, Idaho and Montana Railroad was graded by some 2,000 Chinese workers for only a few miles north of Corinne, Utah, before the work on the line came to a halt due to a lack of funds; however, the owners of the nearby Utah Northern line, which was to be built during that same period entirely by volunteer Mormon labor, must have witnessed the good work done by the Chinese, as the owners ended up hiring 200 of them to complete the “all-Mormon” line in 1875. (“The Utah Northern R.R.,” *Weekly Herald* [Helena, MT], August 12, 1875, 2; see also Clarence A. Reeder, Jr., “The History of Utah’s Railroads, 1859–1884,” chapter 6, UtahRails.net, accessed June 30, 2018, <http://utahrails.net/reeder/reeder-chap6.php>, and Brigham D. Madsen and Betty M. Madsen, “Corinne, the Fair: Gateway to Montana Mines,” *Utah Historical Quarterly* 37 [Winter 1969]: 119–120). Other lines were abandoned shortly after completion. Some ended up shorter than planned due to financial difficulties. Many would be incorporated into larger railroad conglomerates not long after they were built. The changes in ownership and in name make reconstructing this history a special challenge. To the best of my ability, I have listed lines by the names by which the railroads were known when the Chinese began working on them between 1869 and 1889. [n81, n99]

Although the survey presented in my essay is confined to railroads the Chinese built, rebuilt, and maintained between 1869 and 1889 (usually alongside at least some non-Chinese workers), it is worth noting that Chinese laborers worked on several other railroads in the West besides the Central Pacific before 1869. These lines included the Central California Railroad in 1858, the San Jose–San Francisco line in 1860, and the East Side Railroad in Oregon in 1868. For more on these early lines, see “News of the Morning,” *Sacramento Daily Union*, June 15, 1858, 2; “The Chinese in California,” *New York Tribune*, May 1, 1869, 1; “Oregon,” *Daily Alta California* (San Francisco), April 18, 1868, 1; and Barbara Voss, “The Historical Experience of Labor: Archaeological Contributions to Interdisciplinary Research on Chinese Railroad Workers,” *Historical Archaeology* 49, no. 1 (Spring 2015): 4. [n7]

While most of the added information below deals with specific rail lines and issues, I will begin with some comments on bibliographic sources more broadly. There is no book or article focused specifically on the Chinese who worked on these lines between 1869 and 1889. However, two secondary sources devoted to other topics were particularly fruitful as sources of information on this subject. Sue Fawn Chung's superb *The Chinese in the Woods: Logging and Lumbering in the American West* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2015) is the best source for information about Chinese who worked on railroads that figured prominently in the lumber business in Nevada and California in particular, and Bruce MacGregor's impressive *The Birth of California Narrow Gauge: A Regional Study of the Technology of Thomas and Martin Carter* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003) contains key information about Chinese workers on a number of small rail lines in California. The special issue of *Historical Archaeology* devoted to *The Archaeology of Chinese Railroad Workers in North America*, edited by Barbara L. Voss (*Historical Archaeology* 49, no. 1 [2015]), is an invaluable source for information about Chinese artifacts recovered at work camps associated with many rail lines in the West that are discussed in "The Chinese as Railroad Workers after Promontory." [n14, n51, n66, n82, n90, n93, n147, n157]

Chinese on the American Frontier, edited by Arif Dirlik (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2001), contains a number of chapters dealing at least in part with Chinese railroad workers in states including Arizona (Lawrence Michael Fong, "Sojourners and Settlers: The Chinese Experience in America," 39–54, and Florence C. Lister and Robert H. Lister, "Chinese Sojourners in Territorial Prescott," 55–84), Montana (Robert R. Swartout, Jr., "Kwangtung to Big Sky: The Chinese in Montana, 1864–1900," 367–381), Nevada (Loren B. Chan, "The Chinese in Nevada: An Historical Survey, 1856–1970), 85–121), Texas (Edward J. M. Rhoads, "The Chinese in Texas," 165–181), Utah (Don C. Conley, "The Pioneer Chinese of Utah," 291–306), and Wyoming (A. Dudley Gardner, "Chinese Emigrants in Southwest Wyoming, 1868–1885," 341–348), along with passing mention in other essays in that volume. An excellent resource for identifying newspaper articles about Chinese railroad workers in the Pacific Northwest is John R. Litz, "Chinese and Japanese in the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, June 5, 1876, to December 31, 1889," 2010, University of Washington Libraries website, accessed June 26, 2018, <https://www.lib.washington.edu/gmm/collections/mcnews/guides/chinese-and-japanese-in-the-seattle-post-intelligencer-1>. [n24, n56, n59, n69, n78]

While my primary concern was the Chinese railroad workers, studies of specific lines that did not focus on Chinese were helpful as well (when other sources had allowed me to establish that Chinese had played a role in building those lines). Although the following sources do not generally deal with Chinese, they were quite useful for this broader context: Donald B. Robertson, *Encyclopedia of Western Railroad History*, vol. 1: *The Desert States: Arizona*,

Nevada, New Mexico, Utah (Caldwell, ID: Caxton Press, 1986), vol. 2: *The Mountain States—Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming* (Caldwell, ID: Caxton Press, 1991), vol. 3: *Oregon, Washington* (Caldwell, ID: Caxton Press, 1996), and vol. 4: *California* (Caldwell, ID: Caxton Press, 1998); William Deverell, *Railroad Crossing: Californians and the Railroad, 1850–1910* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994); and Richard White, *Railroaded: The Transcontinentals and the Making of Modern America* (New York: Norton, 2011). See also Rick Hamman, *California Central Coast Railways* (Boulder, CO: Pruett, 1980); Richard Orsi, “Railroads in the History of California and the Far West: An Introduction,” *California History* 70, no. 1 (Spring 1991): 2–11; Carlos A. Schwantes and James P. Ronda, *The West the Railroads Made* (Seattle: University of Washington Press/Washington State Historical Society, 2008); Sig Mickelson, *The Northern Pacific Railroad and the Selling of the West: A Nineteenth-Century Public Relations Venture* (Freeman, SD: Pine Hill Press, 1993); Clarence A. Reeder, “History of Utah’s Railroads,” chapter 6, UtahRails.net, accessed June 30, 2018, <http://utahrails.net/reeder/reeder-chap6.php>; Gordon S. Chappell, *Logging along the Denver & Rio Grande: Narrow Gauge Logging Railroads of Southwestern Colorado and Northern New Mexico* (Golden: Colorado Railroad Museum, 1971); and Sol H. Lewis, “A History of the Railroads in Washington,” *Washington Historical Quarterly* 3, no. 3 (July 1912): 186–197. General studies of rail lines built during this period around the country that omit discussion of the Chinese workers but that provide helpful maps, illustrations, and contexts for why various lines were built include Bruce Clement Cooper, *The Classic Western American Railroad Routes* (New York: Chartwell Books, 2010), and Carlos A. Schwantes, *The Pacific Northwest: An Interpretive History* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005).

The following supplementary information and bibliographic notes address specific rail lines—some rather unexpected—which the Chinese helped build (or rebuild) between 1869 and 1889.

The Union Pacific

After 1869, the Union Pacific employed men like Chin Lin Sou (who had worked as a labor contractor for the Central Pacific) to supervise efforts to bring its line up to the standards required by the US government in Utah, Wyoming, and Colorado (Colorado Genealogical Society, *Colorado Families: A Territorial Heritage* [Denver: Colorado Genealogical Society, 1981], 116; John M. Monnett, “Sou, Chin Lin [1837–1894],” in *Encyclopedia of the Great Plains*, ed. David J. Wishart [Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004], accessed June 29, 2018, <http://plainshumanities.unl.edu/encyclopedia/doc/egp.asam.020>). Another Chinese labor contractor who worked on the Union Pacific and became an assistant foreman of a track-building gang was Leo Quoon, who “contracted several thousand Leos from his village for the

work.” His cousin, Leo Say, was a chief foreman on the line (H. K. Wong, *Gum Sahn Yum—Gold Mountain Men*. [Brisbane, CA: Fong Brothers Printing, 1987], 217). Ninety-six Chinese were working in Union Pacific Railroad section camps in southwestern Wyoming in 1870 (A. Dudley Gardner, “Chinese Emigrants in Southwest Wyoming, 1868–1885,” in Dirlik, *Chinese on the American Frontier*, 342). Reports such as this one from the *Utah Reporter* began appearing around the country: “Two hundred and fifty Chinese laborers passed by here Thursday afternoon going to work on the Union Pacific Railroad. The sons of the sun are moving east again, and will doubtless move on until a belt of pigtails encircles the world” (*Utah Reporter* [Corinne, UT], May 28, 1870, 3). Gardner notes that

[t]he Union Pacific Railroad initially recruited Chinese laborers to work on their mainline. After 1874, when labor unrest developed in their coal mines, the Union Pacific Railroad also began hiring Chinese workers to extract coal at their various mines throughout southern Wyoming. ... In 1870, Union Pacific’s auditor, J. W. Gannet, wrote to Oliver Ames, the president of the Union Pacific, that “[t]he difference between Irish and Chinese as to expense appears small, Utah having as many Chinese on a 5 mile section as Platte [division] has of Irish on a 6 mile section. ... At remote section camps, such as Red Desert in Sweetwater County, the majority of the residents were Chinese. In 1870 there were twenty inhabitants at Red Desert [Wyoming]. Of this number, twelve were Chinese. ... In the various section camps along the Union Pacific mainline in southwest Wyoming, Chinese workers outnumbered all other nationalities.” (Gardner, “Chinese Emigrants in Southwest Wyoming,” 342.) [n10]

The Central Pacific

“Lo! The Poor Indian! Where Are the Philanthropists?” *Crisis*, September 15, 1869, 265, refers to Chinese workers on the Central Pacific not having been paid for several months, indicating their continued employment on that line. For his University of Utah master’s thesis, “The Pioneer Chinese of Utah” (and for his article by the same title), Donald C. Conley interviewed ninety-year-old Wallace E. Clay on December 2, 1974. Clay, the son of a telegraph operator and Central Pacific agent at Blue Creek, Utah, had vivid recollections of the Chinese section hands who worked on the railroad there and who basically adopted him as their “mascot” during his childhood. Conley quotes extensively from his interview with Clay (which I was also able to listen to in the Special Collections at Brigham Young University) and also from an unpublished paper Clay wrote, “Personal Life of a Chinese Coolie, 1969–1899” (unpublished paper, January 2, 1969); Donald C. Conley, “The Pioneer Chinese of Utah,” in Dirlik, *Chinese on the American Frontier*, 291–306. See also Donald C. Conley, *The Pioneer Chinese of Utah* (master’s thesis,

Brigham Young University, 1976; Manuscript Archive, Special Collections, Brigham Young University Library, Paper 4616). In the interview, Clay noted that

“about every twelve or fourteen miles [the Central Pacific] had a section house along to keep the track up after it was built, and at each one of these section houses they had a section boss and he was usually a big, burly Irishman, and then he usually had about thirty Chinese coolies working under him as section hands, and that was the setup all the way from Ogden to Roseberg, California.” (Clay quoted in Conley, “The Pioneer Chinese of Utah,” 292)

In Clay’s unpublished paper (quoted by Conley), he wrote, “My name being Wallace Clay, was changed by those Orientals to ‘Wah Lee, Melicum Boy,’ and I more or less lived with them from 1889 to 1892, and only slept with my parents and had breakfast at home mostly at Blue Creek Water Tank Station during one-half of each twenty-four hours” (Conley, “The Pioneer Chinese of Utah,” 292).

Clay continued:

When not “raising taps and tapping ties” those good Chinamen, among whom were “my very best friends,” were many who probably got homesick for their wives and children in China, so they took me as a sort of pet and they gave me much Chinese candy and firecrackers and Chinese money and asked many questions about American life and I asked them many questions about life in China. ... The antiquated box-car they lived in had been remodeled into a “work-car,” in one end of which a series of small bunk beds had been built as a vertical column of three bunks one above the other on both sides of the car end from floor to ceiling so that around eighteen Chinamen could sleep in the bedroom end of the car, while the other end of the car served as a kitchen and dining room wherein there was a castiron stove with its stove pipe going up through the roof of the car with all kinds of pots and pans and skillets hanging around the walls, plus cubby holes for tea cups and big and little blue china bowls and chop sticks and wooden table and benches. ... (292–293)

He often saw them “writing long letters back home to China” with “little paint brushes.” He saw them soothing their sore muscles by taking “time to prepare a nice hot evening bath in a big wooden tub of steaming water” (203). He heard them playing two traditional Chinese instruments to ease their loneliness. And he saw them take pride in preparing their meals:

The cooks built their own type of outdoor ovens in the dirt banks along the side of the sidetrack, and their stake pot splits alongside their bunk cars, where they did most of their cooking when the weather permitted. Each cook would have the use of a very big

iron kettle hung over an open fire and into it they would dump a couple of measures of Chinese unhulled brown rice, Chinese noodles, bamboo sprouts, and dried seaweed, different Chinese seasonings, and American chickens cut up into small pieces. ... Each Chinaman would take his big blue bowl and ladle it full of this mixture. ... (Clay paper, quoted in Conley, 293)

Conley notes that there were other eyewitness accounts of Chinese who worked on the Central Pacific in Utah, but none was as rich as Clay's (Conley, 293). The Central Pacific sometimes employed Chinese who had been hired to build other lines nearby. For example, Chinese workers had been hired late in the construction of the Echo and Park City line in Utah, a non-Mormon project, and were kept on by the Central Pacific for upkeep of the original track in Box Elder County ("Chinese Labor in Utah," *Silver Reef* [UT] *Miner*, June 10, 1882, 2, cited in Conley, "The Pioneer Chinese of Utah," 30). For more on Chinese workers on the Central Pacific after 1869, see the forthcoming essay by Michael Polk, Kenneth Cannon, and Christopher Merritt, "Chinese Workers at Central Pacific Railroad Section Station Camps, 1870–1900" (to be published on the Chinese Railroad Workers in North America Project website). [n8]

Long Island Railroad

On June 7, 1876, this brief squib appeared on page 2 of the *Daily Enquirer* (Cincinnati): "The Chinese have at last appeared as railroad laborers in this part of the country. Over a hundred of them have been set to work relaying the rails of the Rockaway branch of the Long Island Railroad—N. Y. Sun." One week later, the *Marysville* (CA) *Daily Appeal* ran the identical squib, changing only the order of the reference to the original report: "The New York *Sun* says the Chinese have at last appeared. ..." (*Marysville* [CA] *Daily Appeal*, June 14, 1876). The brief report ran nearly verbatim throughout June 1876 in other newspapers in Georgia, Maryland, Missouri, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, and elsewhere.

In the *Macon* (GA) *Weekly Telegraph* on June 20, the same report was repeated with the following line added at the end: "There was a laborers' strike on the road not long since, and this is the result" (8). *The Holt County Sentinel* (Oregon, MO) presented the same information about the Long Island Railroad (LIRR) in a broader context in "Our New York Letter," under a subhead, "The Chinese Problem":

For many months past we have had a very large laboring class upon the verge of starvation, and from the excess of supply over demand in the labor market, wages have been reduced to a minimum—and so far as at least white laborers are concerned. Now we are invaded by a new element, the Chinese, who regard as princely the wages against which white laborers work and are willing to give their

services for much less. On the Rockaway branch of the Long Island Railroad, 120 newly arrived Chinamen were set to work on Friday last at 70 cents per diem. Laborers here, even when starving, have been striking against employers who offered \$1.00 and even \$1.25, saying that such remuneration for their toil was not sufficient to enable them to support their families. But these Chinamen have no families, and can live on a small percentage of what it takes to keep a white man. ... ("Our New York Letter, New York, June 4, 1876," Holt County Sentinel [Oregon, MO], July 16, 1876, 1)

But the news about the Chinese on the LIRR was shrouded in mystery. A search of digital files of the *New York Sun* suggested that the tantalizing original article never existed. When I queried railroad historians who specialized in the Long Island Railroad, none had ever heard of Chinese having worked on the line. Why did the rails of the LIRR need to be “relayed”? Why were the Chinese brought in to do the work? And why was the source text so fugitive?

Only after some determined digging on the part of a meticulous librarian, Mary Munill of the Interlibrary Loan division of Stanford Libraries, and some helpful background information and suggestions from LIRR historians Carol Mills and David Keller, as well as from historian James Haas of the Poppenhusen Institute, did answers to these questions begin to emerge.

Mary Munill located the original article after realizing that it had probably evaded digital keyword searches because the digitized reproduction of it was blurred. The full original squib read as follows:

On Friday all trains on the Rockaway branch of the Long Island Railroad were suspended, and yesterday about 120 newly imported Chinamen made their appearance, and were set at work relaying the rails. The pig-tailed Celestials are housed in cars, which keep them company along the tracs [sic], and are fully satisfied with wages at seventy cents a day. The entire road is to be relaid and put in good order. ("Chinamen Working for Seventy Cents a Day," New York Sun, June 4, 1876, 1)

I am grateful to LIRR historian Carol Mills for having suggested that the Chinese were probably working on Long Island’s Southern Railroad the year that the Long Island Railroad, the Flushing Railroad, the Central Railroad, and the South Side Railroad merged under the ownership of the Poppenhusen family. Mills noted that

1876 was a watershed in the LIRR’s history. Before this, there were many privately owned railroads on Long Island; and for several years, Oliver Charlick, who was President of the LIRR in the 1860s, had an intense rivalry with the Poppenhusen Brothers of College Point, which was only quieted by the death of Charlick, the

election of Henry Havemeyer to the Presidency and the merger in 1876 of the Long Island RR, which was at the time only what we know as the “Main Line”; with the Poppenhusen lines, and the Southern Railroad of Long Island (what is now our Babylon–Montauk portion of the LIRR). This merger caused the abandonment of certain trackage including the LIRR’s branch which ran from Springfield Junction (Queens) to Cedarhurst (our current Far Rockaway branch), which was closed on 1 June 1876, with all trains using the Southern Railroad’s Rockaway line.

For a narrative about the merger of these four railroads under Poppenhusen in 1876, see LIRR Timeline, Long Island Rail Road History Website, accessed June 29, 2018, <http://www.lirrhistorical.com/timeline.html>. Mills surmised that “[w]ithout any real documentation I would guess that Poppenhusen had these workers hired, based on the reputation of the Chinese workers’ participation in the building of the Transcontinental Railroad to upgrade the Southern Railroad’s track structure” (Carol Mills, personal communication, January 21, 2016). Long Island Railroad historian David Keller agreed that this was the likely case (David Keller, personal communication, January 22, 2016).

It was James Haas of the Poppenhusen Institute, who encouraged me to search the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* files for 1976. The *Brooklyn Eagle*, a newspaper located relatively close to the site where this work was taking place, is where I ended up finding the most useful article (and one that placed the number of Chinese workers at 250 rather than 120). It reported that

*the work may be progressed rapidly, the running of trains on the Long Island track to Rockaway has been discontinued, and yesterday two hundred and fifty Chinese laborers were sent to different parts of the roads. They will live in cars, bunks having been erected, and the necessary cooking apparatus furnished. They are to work from dawn to dark. When the road is fully repaired with new iron and ties, and heavily graveled, it will be reopened, and the Southern branch closed for similar repairs. The repairs will extend to the extreme end of the road, on Rockaway Beach, where hitherto poor rails and ties were laid in a bed of beach sand. (“Island Improvements that Interest the Brooklyn Traveling Public,” *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, June 2, 1876, 2)*

I was able to glean key background to this story from Vincent F. Seyfried, *The Long Island Rail Road: A Comprehensive History*, 1: *South Side R. R. of L. I.* (Garden City, NY: printed by author, 1961). Seyfried notes that on July 4, 1875, “two trains a mile and a half beyond the Far Rockaway station smashed into each other, killing nine people.” The inquest revealed that the management had “done little or no maintenance on the Rockaway Branch. The rails had no ‘patent’ connections (probably fish plates) but were joined by old-fashioned chair fastenings the spiking of which was often loose” (61–62). [n97, n98, n99]

As proof of the rotten condition of the roadbed, another train on July 13, “consisting of an engine and seven cars, was thrown on the sand by spreading rails at a point one mile west of Far Rockaway. ... The locomotive plunged down a five foot embankment. ... No one was hurt and the coaches were undamaged, but it was another grim reminder that all was not well on the line. Much of the travel thereafter took to the rival Long Island RR, people shunning the Southern road as a death trap” (Seyfried, *The long Island Rail Road*, 62–63). As Seyfried goes on to point out, management faced a crisis that needed to be addressed before the 1876 beach season drew significant rail traffic. “As if to insure the impossibility of another costly wreck on the Rockaway Branch with its damaging publicity, elaborate and painstaking track repairs were once again prosecuted the following spring [May 1876] just before the beginning of the beach season” (63). (Seyfried does not mention that it was the Chinese who undertook this “elaborate and painstaking” task.) The railroad’s management needed to rebuild the tracks in a short period of time and in a manner that would inspire confidence among beachgoers. The stellar reputation of the Chinese as railroad builders led the railroad’s owners to import between 120 and 250 of them to get the job done. After they completed the work, beachgoers began using the railroad again with confidence that summer. [n97]

California Southern Railroad

In early 1881 work began in earnest on the California Southern Railroad (which would become a subsidiary of the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad), chartered to run between what is now the city of Barstow (then Waterman) and National City (just below San Diego). The key recruiter of Chinese labor for the California Southern Railroad was Ah Quin, a native of Guangdong, China, who had learned English at an American missionary school there, where he also decided to become a Christian. At age twenty, in 1868, he migrated to the United States to seek his fortune and to send money to his family back in China. After a stint working as a cook in an Alaskan mining camp, he visited San Diego. A man who befriended him at the San Diego Chinese Mission offered to put him in charge of securing Chinese workers to build the California Southern Railroad, which was expected to have a huge impact on the local economy. Much of what we know about him comes from a detailed diary he kept in a mix of Chinese and English that is at the San Diego History Center. Based on his description of his work in his diary, Susie Lan Cassel describes his recruitment efforts like this: “When his employers give the word, Ah Quin travels immediately to all areas of southern California, from Riverside County to Orange County to Los Angeles County and sometimes even to San Francisco, in search of workers. He is an effective recruiter, bringing in as many as ninety-two workers at one time, but he still curses himself on days when other recruiters fill the demands more quickly.” (Susie Lan Cassel, “To Inscribe the Self Daily: The Discovery of the Ah Quin Diary,” in *The Chinese in America. A History from Gold Mountain to the New Millennium*, edited by Susie Lan Cassel, 54–75

[Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002], 62). Ah Quin recruited hundreds of Chinese workers for the California Southern. He also supplied the railroad gangs with rice, fish, and other goods, becoming a prominent merchant in the process. As Andrew Griego notes, “[T]hroughout the construction Ah Quin was principally concerned with recruiting, managing the logistics of sending supplies to his workers, and supervising some of the work. He hired foremen to oversee most of the actual construction. ... Much of his income was generated by selling provisions to his men.” (Andrew Griego, “Rebuilding the California Southern Railroad: The Personal Account of a Chinese Labor Contractor, 1884,” *San Diego Historical Society Quarterly* 25, no. 4 (Fall 1979), accessed June 26, 2018, <http://sandieghistory.org/journal/1979/october/railroad>). See also Murray K. Lee, “Ah Quin: One of San Diego’s Founding Fathers,” in Cassel, *The Chinese in America*, 308–328; Will Bowen, “Ah Quin: A San Diego Founding Father,” *San Diego Downtown News*, March 1, 2014, accessed June 29, 2018, <https://sandiegodowntownnews.com/ah-quin-a-san-diego-founding-father>. [n23, n118]

Denver Pacific Railroad

Central Pacific veteran Chin Lin Sou supervised the labor on the Denver Pacific and brought it in under budget (Monnett, “Sou, Chin Lin”; Rhonda Beck, *Union Station in Denver* [Mt. Pleasant, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2016], chapter 3). For more on the significance of the Denver Pacific, see Thomas J. Noel, “All Hail the Denver Pacific: Denver’s First Railroad,” *Colorado Magazine* 50, no. 3 (Spring 1973): 91–116. As Noel put it, the Denver Pacific (DP)’s completion in 1870 gave Denver a “seven-year lead [over the rival Colorado Central line, completed in 1877] as the railroad center and the dominant metropolis of the state” (109–110). He notes that “[t]he isolated prairie town, which stagnated between 1860 and 1870, septupled its population in the next decade from 4,759 to 35,629 residents,” as the city “emerged as the banking and commercial center of the region after the DP arrived,” as well as a destination for tourists (111–112). Noel attributes “Denver’s emergence as the regional metropolis of the Rocky Mountain area” to the arrival of the Denver Pacific (116). See also William Wei, *Asians in Colorado: A History of Persecution and Perseverance in the Centennial State* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2016), 76–83. [n88]

Midland Railroad

The headline in the *New York Times* read “Coolies in New Jersey. Arrival of One Hundred and Fifty Chinamen at Pompton, N. J.—Three Hundred More on the Way—What the Contractors Pay for their Services” (*New York Times*, September 22, 1870, 3). The next day the *Trenton State Gazette* reported that “[t]wo carloads of Chinamen, engaged to work on the Midland

Railroad, arrived at Jersey City by the Erie road a few days ago. They came from California and were brought by Simpson & Co., contractors” (“State Items,” *Trenton [NJ] State Gazette*, September 23, 1870, 2). Some two weeks later another New Jersey newspaper noted that “[i]t is reported that the contractors on the Midland Railroad in this State have employed 500 Chinamen to do the grading between Newton and Paupton [sic] on the line, the region being rocky and uncultivated” (New Republic [Camden, NJ], October 8, 1870, 6) See also “Chinese Laborers for the Midland Railroad,” *New York Evangelist*, April 7, 1870, 8. [n44]

Northern Pacific Railroad

A particularly useful source for information about the Chinese on the Northern Pacific Railroad is Robert R. Swartout, Jr., “Kwangtung to Big Sky: The Chinese Experience in Frontier Montana,” in Dirlik, *Chinese on the American Frontier*. Swartout reports: “During the early 1880s, the first transcontinental railroad to pass through Montana—the Northern Pacific—was being constructed at a frantic pace under the leadership of Henry Villard. Because of the critical shortage of skilled labor at the western end of the project and the reputation of the Chinese as experienced and dependable workers, Villard and his associates hired fifteen thousand Chinese to work on the Northern Pacific line through Washington, Idaho, and Montana” (370). Swartout’s citation for this number and the rationale for their hiring is “First Across the Northwest—Northern Pacific,” MS, box 515, 5, President’s Subject files, Northern Pacific Railway Company Records, Minnesota Historical Society, 63n21 (380). Swartout notes that the portion of the Northern Pacific along the Clark Fork River in northern Idaho and western Montana “contained some of the most rugged terrain found anywhere along the Northern Pacific line” (370). Swartout quotes an untitled newspaper report from an unidentified paper from October 28, 1882:

One must ride over the completed track, or watch the thousands of men at work in these rock-ribbed hills, see the deep cuttings, the immense fillings, count the bridges and miles of trestle-work that carry the trains safely over streams and arms of lakes and inlets, to fairly realize the expenditure of muscle ... necessary for such a work as building a great railway route through this mountainous country. At paces, for instance, a point near Cabinet Landing [Idaho], to the men who do the labor, and even to subordinate leaders, the passage seemed closed against them. The mountain towers like a prop to the sky, and from the water’s edge it rises like a wall, presenting no break or crevice for a foothold. ... [C]able ropes holding a plank staging go down the precipitous sides of the mountain. Down rope ladders, to this staging clamber Chinamen armed with drills, and soon the rock slides are filled with Giant powder [supplied by Giant Powder company]. Then they clamber up, the final blast is fired,

and the foothold made by the explosive soon swarms with Celestials; the “can’t be done” has been done. (370–371) Newspaper clipping, October 28, 1882, Secretary Scrapbooks, 1866–1906, box 4, vol. 25, NP Records (380).

Swartout notes that the Chinese “played a crucial role in constructing the Mullan Tunnel, which enabled the Northern Pacific to cross over the Continental Divide not far from Helena, Montana,” and adds that “Chinese workers built the critical stretch of line leading to Stampede Pass in Washington Territory’s North Cascade Mountains, which allowed the Northern Pacific to reach the Puget Sound” (371). For more on Chinese workers on the Northern Pacific, see Marjorie Akin, James C. Bard, and Gary J. Weisz, “Asian Coins Recovered from Chinese Railroad Labor Camps: Evidence of Cultural Practices and Transnational Exchange,” *Historical Archaeology* 49, no. 1 (2015): 110–121; Christopher W. Merritt, Gary Weisz, and Kelly J. Dixon, “Verily the Road was Built with Chinaman’s Bones’: An Archaeology of Chinese Line Camps in Montana,” *International Journal of Historical Archaeology* 16, no. 4 (December 2012): 666–695; Kelly J. Dixon, “Landscapes of Change: Culture, Nature, and the Archeological Heritage of Transcontinental Railroads in the North American West,” in Chang and Fishkin, *The Chinese and the Iron Road*; and Robert Weaver, with Gary Weisz, James Baird, and Kelly Dixon, “Stepping Light: Archaeological Sites along the Northern Pacific Line in Idaho and Western Montana” (digital essay forthcoming on Chinese Railroad Workers in North America Project website). For an overview of archaeological work on Northern Pacific sites, see Barbara Voss, “Archaeological Contributions to Research on Chinese Railroad Workers in America,” in Chang and Fishkin, *The Chinese and the Iron Road*. See also “The New North-West: From the Rockies to the Cascade Range,” *Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine* 24 (October 1882): 867–878, accessed June 30, 2018, <http://www.unz.com/print/Century-1882oct-00863>.

For information on Chin Gee Hee’s recruitment of Chinese laborers for the Northern Pacific (and also the Great Northern Railway), see Kornel S. Chang, *Pacific Connections: The Making of U.S.–Canadian Borderlands* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), 38–39; Willard G. Jue, “Chin Gee-Hee, Chinese Pioneer Entrepreneur in Seattle and Toishan,” in *The Annals of the Chinese Historical Society of the Pacific Northwest* (Seattle: Chinese Historical Society of the Pacific Northwest, 1983), 31–48; Ruthanne Lum McCunn, “Chin Gee-hee, Railroad Baron,” in *Chinese American Portraits: Personal Histories 1828–1988* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1988), 47–55; and Elisabeth Lew-Williams, “The Remarkable Life of a Sometimes Railroad Worker: Chin Gee Hee, 1844–1929,” in Chang and Fishkin, *The Chinese and the Iron Road*. It should be noted that the Great Northern Railroad “employed very few Chinese workers,” increasingly turning to “an even cheaper source of labor, the Japanese workers” (Swartout, “Kwangtung to Big Sky,” 371). [n27, n33, n36, n61, n78, n82, n89, n90, n92]

Chesapeake and Ohio Railway

On July 29, 1870, the *Alexandria (VA) Gazette* ran a story under the headline “Chinese Laborers”:

The present western terminus of the road is at White Sulfur[sic] Springs, Greenbrier County [West Virginia], and at this point the Orientals will in all probability first appear. Mr. Huntington [sic], who has been building railroads in California, has taken the contract for the construction of Lewis Tunnel, a few miles from White Sulfur Springs, and his agents are now recruiting a corps of Chinese laborers in California, and their arrival is daily expected.” (Alexandria [VA] Gazette, July 29, 1870, 2)

Construction on the Chesapeake and Ohio (C&O) line had stopped at a particularly challenging tunnel. The railroad’s president, Collis P. Huntington, one of the “Big Four” owners of the Central Pacific, who went on to help develop the Southern Pacific and the C&O, had bragged to the press that his agents knew to pick out men with abundant experience in precisely the kind of work required for the Lewis Tunnel. That same day, the *Richmond Whig* (quoting a letter to the *Cincinnati Gazette* from White Sulphur Springs of July 21) reported that Huntington had told them that he had

*made arrangements to have a large force of Chinese “navvies” sent on from California and Oregon. He says they have got through the heaviest work on the California, Oregon, and San Joaquin Valley railroad, and have recently discharged large numbers of superior hands. His agents know where to put their hands on the same men, and he expects soon to have forwarded a lot of the best tunnel hands he ever saw. The contractors for the construction of the Lewis Tunnel, a few miles from this place, expect to have five hundred of these new hands at work within four weeks from this time. ... (“The Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad. Interesting Statements of the President—Five Hundred Chinese Laborers Expected Within Four Weeks,” *Richmond Whig*, July 7, 1870, 2)*

Huntington was convinced that he could gather the best tunnel hands in the world to do the job. Indeed, he gave such confident interviews to the press that the day before the *Alexandria Gazette* article had appeared, the *New York Daily Tribune* reported—erroneously, as it turned out—that the Chinese workers had already arrived in West Virginia to do the work (“Chinese in West Virginia. Tunneling for the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad,” *New York Daily Tribune*, July 28, 1870, 2).

Despite these reports of their arrival, by September there was still no sign of the Chinese workers in West Virginia. The *Richmond Whig* observed:

During the summer we were repeatedly told that the contractors on the Chesapeake and Ohio railroad beyond Covington had engaged a thousand or more Chinese laborers, and that before fall set in “Cuffy” and “John Chinaman” would be measuring skill and endurance tunneling mountains and grading railroad beds through that hitherto unopened county. Well, summer has passed and there are no Chinese there yet, but we hear that the colored laborers are working much more to the satisfaction of their employers, and it may not be profitable, therefore, after all, to procure any rival labor. (“Chinese—Their Cost as Laborers—None on the Chesapeake and Ohio as Yet,” Richmond Whig, September 16, 1870, 3)

The article then detailed information received in a letter from a San Francisco correspondent filled with “a good deal of information about the Chinese as laborers.”

He says experienced men for railroad work can be obtained in large numbers at \$15 (gold) per month and board, or for \$25 in gold without board; hours of labor, ten per day during six days of the week. For farm hands the price is the same. They will be willing to contract to work from one to three years, and if well treated will readily extend their contract at the expiration of that period.

An interpreter will be required for every 100 men or less number at \$50 per month in gold and he will act as foreman, one cook for every fifty men at \$30 (gold) per month where the Chinese board themselves. ... They are unwilling to pay their own travelling expenses and \$60 in gold has to be paid in advance per head to meet the cost of transportation to points in the South. Heretofore they have required their employers also to pay their expenses back to California, but they will not now insist, it is thought, upon this. Their food is rice, fresh pork, and chow chow, a mixture of dried fish, vegetables, &c., and their rations cost about the same as those of colored hands. Tea is altogether used as a beverage and the most ordinary negro quarters will satisfy them. There is no danger of desertion or of disobedience, owing to the influence which the Chinese societies at San Francisco have over them. From this statement it will be seen that the Chinese are not such cheap laborers after all. (“Chinese—Their Cost as Laborers—None on the Chesapeake and Ohio as Yet,” Richmond Whig, September 16, 1870, 3)

The *Richmond Whig*'s assessment of the real cost of Chinese labor proved to be astute. The report by the paper's San Francisco correspondent was accurate on most things, but not when it came to the notion that “they will not now insist” on having their employers pay the cost of their transportation back to California.

On August 10, 1870, in a letter to H. D. Whitcomb, the C&O's chief engineer, about the labor challenges currently facing the company, Huntington wrote that he did not want to have the tunneling "pushed forward any faster than safety, and a dose of regard for economy, required" (C. P. Huntington to H. D. Whitcomb, August 10, 1870, Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad Company Papers, Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland, OH). On August 20 he received a letter "on the question of coolie labor" from Charles Seymour on behalf of the contractors on the railroad, Lee and Huston, who noted that Whitcomb had informed them that "the Chinese must be engaged for one year." While noting that they might have to pay slightly more than they had been for local labor, Seymour asked whether, with "the use of labor at hand, the road cannot be completed as cheaply [as] & more rapidly" than by "coolie labor imported at a heavy expense, which, although efficient, & probably profitable in heavy work, might be found more expensive in lighter, and shorter jobs, than other labor." In other words, although it might be worth the cost of having the Chinese laborers do the hard tunneling, there wasn't a year's worth of tunneling to do: the lighter work could be done by local workers with ease, and paying local workers a bit more to get them to do the hard tunneling might be cheaper than importing the Chinese (Charles Seymour to C. P. Huntington, August 20, 1870). The fact that their contracts would mandate that Huntington pay for their transportation to and from West Virginia and employ them for a full year (when the hard tunneling would not take that long to complete) made the cost of importing this "cheap labor" to West Virginia prohibitive. Huntington decided to use local black convict labor instead.

The Lewis Tunnel, on the West Virginia stretch of the C&O line, where Huntington had planned to use expert Chinese "tunnel hands" from the Central Pacific, was not just any tunnel; it would become the most famous tunnel in the nation. As Scott Reynolds Nelson argues persuasively, it was there in the Lewis Tunnel that a short, African-American nineteen-year-old from New Jersey would become the stuff of legend. Having shoplifted from a general store while visiting Virginia, the teenager ended up in the Virginia Penitentiary, where he was leased out, under the convict leasing system, to Huntington's railroad. In the Lewis Tunnel he would test his strength and endurance against the steam-powered machine that was his rival. (Scott Reynolds Nelson, *Steel Drivin' Man—John Henry—the Untold Story of an American Legend* [New York: Oxford University Press, 2006]). If Huntington had not changed his mind, it might have been a Chinese veteran of the Central Pacific, rather than John Henry, competing with the steam drill. [n111, n112, n113].

Additional Resources for Information on Other Rail Lines

Sue Fawn Chung's 2015 *Chinese in the Woods* provides extremely useful information about railroads, including the Virginia and Truckee Railroad, the Bodie & Benton Railroad, the Carson

Tahoe Railroad, the Carson and Colorado Railroad, the Yosemite Sugar Pine Railroad, Lake Valley Railroad, Loma Prieta Railroad, and the Nevada County Narrow Gauge Railroad. Chung notes that between February 18, 1869, and April 1, 1869, twelve hundred men, predominantly Chinese, were employed grading and surveying the Virginia and Truckee Railroad. Recruited by Chinese labor contractors, including Dr. Ah Kee, Ah Jack, and Ah Sing, they lived in thirty-eight camps between Virginia City and Carson City, Nevada. Most were veterans of the nearly completed Central Pacific (Chung, *Chinese in the Woods*, 40, 56, 170). The first twenty-one miles of the line were completed on November 29, 1869. The remaining thirty-one miles to Reno, which connected the Comstock Lode to the Central Pacific, was completed on August 24, 1872. “The building of the Virginia and Truckee proved to be a remarkable achievement. Surveying and construction engineer Isaac “Ike” James] held the grade to a maximum of 2.2 per cent as the railroad descended 1,600 feet in thirteen and a half miles from Virginia City to reach the mills along the Carson River. To achieve this, the track had to make the equivalent of seventeen complete circles. Most of the work was done by Chinese labor” (“Virginia and Truckee Railroad,” Online Nevada Encyclopedia, accessed July 1, 2018, <http://www.onlinenevada.org/articles/virginia-and-truckee-railroad>). For more on the Virginia and Truckee Railroad, see Gilbert H. Kneiss, *The Virginia and Truckee Railway*, Hathi Trust Digital Collection (Boston: Railway and Locomotive Historical Society, 1938). According to Kneiss, many of the men who built the railroad “were Chinese who had become experienced and trustworthy railroad builders on the just completed Central Pacific” (9). See also David E. Wroblewski, “The Archaeology of Chinese Work Camps on the Virginia and Truckee Railroad” (master’s thesis, Department of Anthropology, University of Nevada–Reno, 1996). The nearly all-Chinese work force on the railroad is widely acknowledged. (See, for example, the Online Nevada Encyclopedia, a project of Nevada Humanities, which notes that “[m]ost of the work done [on the Virginia and Truckee Railroad] was done by Chinese labor.” [n82, n89]

Chung notes that the Bodie & Benton Railroad in Mono County, Nevada, was constructed by Chinese workers between 1881 and 1882 “primarily to serve the mines in between the towns of Bodie and Benton” (173). The steep thirty-two-mile narrow-gauge line carried lumber from the town of Bodie to the sawmill at Mono Mills, 2,000 feet below. It never made it to Benton. For a discussion of the Mono Mills, a site associated with the Bodie & Benton where Chinese workers lived alongside Paiutes, see Charlotte K. Sunseri, “Alliance Strategies in the Racialized Railroad Economies of the American West,” *Historical Archaeology* 49, no. 1 (2015): 85–99. [n17]

Between April and August 1875, as Chung tells us, between 150 and 250 men, most of whom were Chinese, built the Carson Tahoe Railroad for the Carson Tahoe Lumber and Flume Company (Chung, *Chinese in the Woods*, 163; Chung cites INS RG 85, Partnership Records, RG83, file 13561/141, NARA, San Bruno). On June 21, 1880, the *Reno Gazette* reported that over

300 Chinese workers were now at work on the Carson and Colorado Railroad in Nevada, “grading in Churchill canyon, Lyon county,” and that by the end of the week “the working force will be increased by 200 Chinamen, in all, from Reno and Wadsworth” (*Reno [NV] Gazette-Journal*, June 21, 1880, 2. See also Chung, *Chinese in the Woods*, 90, 104, 135, 144, 169, 172, 174, 179). [n22, n23]

When the Madera Sugar Pine Lumber Company in California built the narrow-gauge, 140-mile Yosemite Mountain Sugar Pine Railroad near Fish Camp, California, in the mid-1880s “to move saw longs through the mountains,” as Chung notes, “approximately one third of its workers were Chinese” (Chung, *Chinese in the Woods*, 175). [n86] Chung also surmises that George Washington Chubbuck, who owned and managed timberland on the south shore of Lake Tahoe and built the narrow-gauge Lake Valley Railroad from Bijou to Sierra House, Nevada, for his lumber business, employed Chinese laborers to do the grading, since “they were experienced and available” (Chung, *Chinese in the Woods*, 164). [n38] Citing Rick Hamman’s *California Coastal Central Railways*, Chung writes that in July 1882 Charles Crocker, along with several associates connected with the Southern Pacific Railroad (A. C. Bassett, N. T. Smith, and Joseph L. Willcutt), as well as Alvin Sanborn, the president of Watsonville Mill and Lumber Company, “filed articles of incorporation for Loma Prieta Company, and by 1882 they began to build the Loma Prieta Railroad in Central California that ended in Monte Vista” (Hamman, *California Coastal Central Railways*, 33–43, cited in Chung, *Chinese in the Woods*, 180). Chung notes that “[i]n 1883 the *Sacramento Bee* reported that there were two hundred Chinese graders working with Swedish woodchoppers. W. F. Knox of Sacramento brought in his two Chinese track teams, one clearing and grading and the second laying ties and spiking down rails. The Chinese also built most or all of the eleven wooden bridges on this line” (Chung, *Chinese in the Woods*, 180). [n39] Chung also reports that “[i]n 1875 approximately 150 Euro-Americans and 300 Chinese were employed to work on the twenty-two-mile-long railroad running through Nevada and Placer Counties, California, called the Nevada County Narrow Gauge” (Marvin Elliott Locke, “A History of the Nevada County Narrow Gauge Railroad” [master’s thesis, University of California, Los Angeles, 1962]; Chung, *Chinese in the Woods*, 176). Chung also cites the *Nevada City Transcript*, February 18 and 27, 1875, and May 24, 1876. [n38, 39, n49, n86]

Between 1873 and 1879 Chinese laborers were responsible for building the Eureka and Palisade Railroad, a narrow-gauge railroad in northwestern Nevada, which ran a ninety-mile route from Eureka, the county seat, to Palisade, Nevada, linking Eureka’s silver mines to the transcontinental line. For more on their role in railroad construction in Eureka County, see Loren B. Chan, “The Chinese in Nevada: A Historical Survey, 1856–1970,” *Nevada Historical Quarterly* 25 (Winter 1982): 266–314, 283. See also Kneiss, *Bonanza Railroads* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1941), 84–85. [n33]

For more on the Utah, Idaho and Montana Railroad, see Reeder, *History of Utah's Railroads*; Madsen and Madsen, "Corinne, the Fair," 7; and *Oregonian* (Portland), July 2, 1872, 2. [n80]

John Litz's 2010 annotated bibliography of articles involving Chinese and Japanese in the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* points us to documentary evidence of the involvement of Chinese workers in the construction of numerous railroads in Oregon and Washington, including the Celilo and Wallula Railroad, the Oregon Pacific Railroad, the Puyallup Railroad, the Seattle and Walla Walla Railroad, and the Thurston County Railroad (also known as the Olympia and Tenino Railroad). For example, entries for 1880 include "2/18 P.3 Local Paragraphs (500 Chinese left Portland to work on Celilo to Wallula line)" and "10/23 P.3 Celilo and Wallula Railroad (200 Chinese laying track)" (34). Entries for 1881 include "8/31 P.3 Oregon Pacific Railroad (Kwong Mow Co. of Portland to furnish 500 Chinese laborers)" (37). There is also this entry in 1884: "4/16 P.1 Railroad Building (1,200 Chinese laborers working on Oregon Pacific near Corvallis)" (70). Litz's entries involving the Puyallup Railroad include the following for 1877: "1/8 P.3 (large number of Chinese employed to build Puyallup coal road)"; "2/3 From Tacoma (250 Chinese working on Puyallup road)"; "2/6 (360 Chinese grading Puyallup railroad)"; and "3/6 P.3 More Chinamen (44 railroad workers for Puyallup road)" (6–8). (The Puyallup Railroad was a thirty-mile railroad from New Tacoma to the coal mines in Puyallup. See *Annual Report, Commissioner of the General Land Office to the Secretary of the Interior for Fiscal Year Ended 1877–1878* [Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1878, 353]). [n59] Litz directs us to articles mentioning Chinese involvement in the construction of the Seattle and Walla Walla Railroad in 1876 and 1877: 1876: "9/15 P.3 Progressing (Chinese working on Seattle & Walla Walla Railroad)" (5); 1877: "7/24 Reinforcements (50 Chinese laborers moved from Puyallup road to Seattle & Walla Walla)" (12); "12/1 P.2 The Chinese Problem (editorial, 350 work on Seattle & Walla Walla Railway)" (15). [n69] Litz includes the following entries for 1877: "9/6 P.3 Tenino Railroad (30 Chinese workers)" (14) (John R. Litz, "Chinese and Japanese in the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, June 5, 1876, to December 31, 1889," 2010, University of Washington Libraries website, accessed July 1, 2018, <https://www.lib.washington.edu/gmm/collections/mcnews/guides/chinese-and-japanese-in-the-seattle-post-intelligencer-1>. [n24, n56, n59, n69, n78, n90]

Chinese workers helped build the line that Litz refers to as the Tenino Railroad, also known at different times as the Olympia and Tenino Railroad, and the Thurston County Railroad. The narrow-gauge railroad, which employed some forty Chinese in its construction, was built in response to the Northern Pacific's bypass of Olympia in favor of Tacoma (Chung, *Chinese in the Woods*, 175). "Being cut off from the railroad did not set too well with the Olympians and they began to promote a narrow gauge line from the territory's capital to Tenino. After much trouble and delays the branch line was finally completed in July 1878. Originally built by the Thurston

County Railroad Construction Company, the line was renamed the Olympia and Chehalis Valley Railroad in 1881 and ten years later became the Port Townsend and Southern Railroad Company” (Art Dwelley, “A Brief History of Tenino,” City of Tenino, WA, website, accessed July 1, 2018, <http://www.ci.tenino.wa.us/historic-sites-and-structures>). The Thurston County Railroad, completed in 1878, “saved Olympia from economic oblivion and preserved it as the capital of Washington.” “Olympia’s Historic Chinese Community,” Olympia, WA, Historical Society and Bigelow House Museum website, accessed July 1, 2018, <http://olympiahistory.org/olympias-historic-chinese-community-links>). [n78, n90]

The Walla Walla and Columbia River Railroad is sometimes referred to as the Wallula Railroad. For more information, see “Chinese Americans in the Columbia River Basin,” Columbia River Basin Ethnic History Archive website, accessed June 30, 2018, <http://archive.vancouver.wsu.edu/crbeha/ca/ca.htm>. [n83]

The Oregon Central Railroad, built between April 15, 1868, and November 2, 1872, was the first effort to operate long-distance rail service in Oregon. The line employed Chinese labor from the beginning (see Oregon Central Railroad Records, Online Archive of California, accessed June 30, 2018, <https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/c8p55q8m>. On May 1, 1868, the *San Francisco Bulletin* cited reports from the *Portland Oregonian* that Superintendent [M. S.] Hart of the Oregon Central Railroad and his contractors had employed forty Chinese and expected in the next day or two to employ twenty-five or so more (“Oregon,” *San Francisco Bulletin*, May 1, 1868, 3.) Some early projections predicted that as many as “1,000 additional Chinese laborers” might be hired (“Chinese Americans in the Columbia River Basin,” Archives and Special Collections, Washington State University, Vancouver, accessed June 30, 2018, <https://content.libraries.wsu.edu/digital/collection/cchm/custom/crbasin>). [n55] Financial records and bridge alignment notes pertaining to the construction of the Oregon Central Railroad may be accessed through the Oregon Central Railroad Records at the Online Archive of California website, <https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/c8p55q8m>. Additional information is available at the website of the Columbia River Basin Ethnic History Archive of Washington State University, Vancouver, the Idaho State Historical Society, the Oregon Historical Society, the Washington State Historical Society, and Washington State University, Pullman website: <https://library.vancouver.wsu.edu/archive/crbeha>. See also “Oregon,” *San Francisco Bulletin*, May 1, 1868, 3. [n55]

In 1879 the Oregon State Journal quoted the Corvallis Gazette as noting that “[t]he contractors on the West Side railroad ... have sent several hundred Chinamen and a large number of teams forward on the line of the road, and grading is now being pushed south of town towards Luckiamute. Work is progressing rapidly, and it will not be long before the moving, crawling horde of Chinamen are out of our county, pushing south into Benton. The work of grading on

this road is mostly done by the ‘heathen Chinees,’ and does not give employment to as many white men and teams as had been anticipated” (*Oregon State Journal* [Eugene], July 5, 1879, 5). [n84]

Many California railroads made extensive use of a Chinese workforce. In December 1869, a paper in Connecticut reported that “[t]hree hundred and fifty additional Chinese laborers were placed at work” on the California and Oregon Railroad (*New London [CT] Democrat*, December 25, 1869, 2). The report went on to say that work on the road was “being vigorously prosecuted,” and that as of December, fifty-one miles were “completed and in running order from the junction with the Central Pacific Railroad to Roseville.” In January 1870 there were reported to be “two or three hundred Chinese laborers” employed by the California and Oregon Railroad Company in Marysville, California (“California—Marysville,” *Daily Alta California* [San Francisco], January 24, 1870, 1). [n18] In September 1869, “300 China Men and 180 teams [were] hard at work” on the California Pacific Railroad, uniting Vallejo and Marysville by rail (*San Francisco Chronicle*, September 25, 1869, 4.) [n18, n20]

Also in 1869 the *San Francisco Chronicle* reported that “about one hundred Chinamen engaged on the Western Pacific Railroad passed through Oakland on Wednesday for the Point, where they will be at work set by the Company” (“Oakland Jottings,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, June 3, 1870, 1) By June 9 “[o]ver two hundred Chinamen” who had worked on the Central Pacific Railroad arrived at Sacramento and “left immediately for the Western Pacific Railroad Work” (*Daily Alta California* [San Francisco], June 12, 1869). A Chicago paper reported shortly thereafter that “[t]he ‘Western Pacific railroad’ will, with the ‘Southern Pacific’ line unite San Francisco with Sacramento, about the end of August next. In Livermore Pass there is some heavy work—a tunnel of 1,100 feet in length, and a deep ‘cut’ of 1,400 feet long being necessary. About 2,000 men, one half of them Chinese, are at work on it” (“Railroad Items,” *Daily Inter Ocean* [Chicago], June 14, 1869, 3). [n85]

As Susan Lehmann has observed, “When the Southern Pacific Railroad declined to build a line from its railhead at Pajaro to Santa Cruz, a group of businessmen from Santa Cruz, Soquel and Aptos organized the Santa Cruz Railroad in 1873. The line was subsidized by the county and ran east from Santa Cruz through Soquel and Aptos linking up with the Southern Pacific at Pajaro. Although passengers could go on to other points by changing trains, the line was used primarily for hauling freight” (Susan Lehmann, “Transportation: Railroads and Streetcars,” *Santa Cruz History*, Santa Cruz Public Libraries website, accessed July 1, 2018, <http://www.santacruzpl.org/history/articles/53>). Lehman notes that “[a] great majority of the labor needed to construct the Santa Cruz Railroad and other lines in the county was provided by Chinese workers.” While working on the Santa Cruz Railroad, “the Chinese workers lived in a tent camp a mile east of the city. Paid a dollar a day of which two dollars a week were deducted

for food, the workers labored six ten hour days per week.” This twenty-mile narrow-gauge railroad from the Santa Cruz harbor to Watsonville was completed in 1874. The Santa Cruz and Felton Railroad, “a narrow gauge line incorporated in 1874 and completed in 1875 ... ran between the lumber flume in Felton and the wharves of Santa Cruz, eight miles away but did not go beyond the County. The line was operated as an independent entity until the South Pacific Coast Railroad leased the tracks and rolling stock in 1879.” Lehman notes that “[t]he eight miles of track for the Santa Cruz and Felton Railroad was constructed in just eight months with all but the Mission Hill tunnel in Santa Cruz built by Chinese. That tunnel was constructed by [thirty-two] Cornish miners, employed because the city of Santa Cruz did not want a large crew of Chinese working in the center of the city” (Lehmann, “Transportation”). [n67, n68]

Construction of the Stockton and Copperopolis Railroad “primarily by 500 to 600 Chinese workers, began in Stockton in San Joaquin County in November, 1870. On May 1, 1871, the road was complete to Milton, and its first passenger train reached there 10 days later, the fare being 75 cents for the round-trip. But the Stockton and Copperopolis Railroad would venture no farther, never advancing to the latter locale” (Judith Marvin, Julia Costello, and Salvatore Manna, *Angels Camp and Copperopolis* [Mt. Pleasant, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2009], 115). [n76]

The North Pacific Coast Railroad, a narrow-gauge line that ran north from Sausalito, through Marin County, along the eastern shore of Tomales Bay, then turning inland to the farms of Sonoma County, required each contractor “to hire large Chinese gangs to begin work. By March 1, three hundred men were running scrapers and buckets along the Saucelito [sic]–Tomales survey line” (MacGregor, *Birth of California Narrow Gauge*, 89). [620n] After the contractors “got the contract for the 1,250-foot tunnel through the crest of White’s Hill, ... eighty-five contract Chinese shovelmen went to work on the approaches to the tunnel, split between a day and a night shift” (*Sausalito Weekly Herald*, April 12, 1873, cited in MacGregor, *Birth of California Narrow Gauge*, 620n). See also “North Pacific Coast Railroad,” Pacific Coast Narrow Gauge website, accessed July 11, 2016, <http://www.pacificng.com/template.php?page=roads/ca/npc/index.htm>. [n50, n51]

Additional information about Chinese work on the South Pacific Coast Railroad may be found in MacGregor, *Narrow Gauge Portrait: South Pacific Coast* (Glenwood, IN: Glenwood Publishers, 1975), 93–96 (as well as in *California Farmer and Journal of Useful Sciences*, November 22, 1877, 1). MacGregor notes that despite the fact that a new state constitution adopted in California in 1879 prohibited corporations—as well as state, county, and municipal governments—from hiring Chinese workers, as late as May 1, 1880, “seven hundred men, the majority Chinese, continued on the South Pacific Coast’s construction payroll,” suggesting that

management “was willing to risk violating the state constitution rather than jeopardize the opening of the railroad” (MacGregor, *Birth of California Narrow Gauge*, 533, 559). [n74, n108]

A good source for information on the Coronado Railroad in Southern California is Joe Ditler, “Ode to the Coronado Train ...,” *Coronado (CA) Times*, June 11, 2014 <http://coronadotimes.com/news/2014/06/11/ode-to-the-coronado-train>. Ditler notes that the “early iron rail sections arrived by ship from England in 1887 and were laid down by Chinese and Kumeyaay [local Native American tribe] workers in August of that year to help with Coronado’s rapid growth. The workers, it said, were paid a dollar a day.” A notice about the Chinese working on the San Diego and San Bernardino Railroad appeared in the *San Diego Union* in 1872: “Work on the S. D. & S. B. R. R. Fifty men are engaged in grading on the S. D. & S. B. R. R ... and the force will be increased in a few days by the addition of fifty Chinamen” (*San Diego Union*, November 26, 1872, 3). See also Mary C. Miller, “The Anti-Chinese Movement in San Diego, 1870–1882” typescript ms., San Diego History Center, 1972, 3. Miller notes that “[a]lthough the employment of fifty Chinese in the grading of the San Diego and San Bernardino Railroad in 1872 had caused no disturbance, subsequent employment of Chinese during the depression years after 1873 did” (3). Information on Chinese workers on the Los Angeles and Independence Railroad may be found in *Owyhee Daily Avalanche* (Silver City, ID), January 5, 1875, 2; *New Orleans Times*, March 26, 1875, 8; and “Los Angeles & Independence Railroad,” RailsWest website, accessed June 30, 2018, <http://www.railswest.com/history/californiabeginnings.html>. [n27, n41, n61]

The *Russian River Flag* reported in the spring of 1873 that work was being pushed forward on the California Central Narrow Gauge Railroad “starting out from Benicia and running up the Sacramento Valley” and predicted that “three hundred Chinamen will soon be at work on the line” (*Russian River Flag* [Healdsburg, CA], May 29, 1873). For general information about the line, see George Woodman Hilton, *American Narrow Gauge Railroads* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1990), 338, and Kneiss, *Bonanza Railroads*, 138. Ultimately, the project failed. [n19, n35]

Chinese workers on the Sierra Valley and Mohawk Railroad are referenced not only in the time book in the Sierra Valley and Mohawk Railroad Collection, 1886–1887, in the California State Railroad Museum in Sacramento, but also in the *Weekly Nevada State Journal* (Reno), September 17, 1887, 4.

Chinese immigration agent and labor contractor Cornelius Koopmanschap sent numerous Chinese to work on railroads in the South. When some 500 Chinese laborers recruited by Koopmanschap arrived in Chattanooga, Tennessee, in July 1870 to work on the Alabama and Chattanooga Railroad, , the *Chattanooga Times* described them as a “a fine looking, intelligent

lot of men” who “have been in this country from two to fifteen years. Most of them have worked on the Central Pacific Railroad” (Chattanooga Times quoted in “The Chinese. The Coming Man Arrived,” Cincinnati Daily Gazette, July 18, 1870, 1). Sadly, by the summer of 1871 the line had run out of funding, and Koopmanschap abandoned about 350 of these Chinese workers with no pay. When he visited them, he found them living “on blackberries and crawfish.” He left them in that situation and made no effort to help them (Lake Village Times (Laconia, NH), August 12, 1871, 4). For background on the Alabama and Chattanooga Railroad and the fraud in which it became mired, see A. B. Moore, “Railroad Building in Alabama during Reconstruction,” *Journal of Southern History* 1, no. 4 (November 1935): 421–442, esp. 427–440. In August 1870 the Cincinnati Inquirer reported that

[t]he influx of Chinamen engaged to work on Southern railroads still continues, and is growing in proportion. Yesterday five car loads came by the North Missouri Railroad. There were 160 men in the party, and they were sent from San Francisco by Koopmanschap & Co. who has made a contract for furnishing them with the Selma and Gulf Railroad Company. They are to be employed as laborers in the construction of the railroad, and have contracted to work three years. Each laborer is to receive sixteen dollars in gold monthly, free board, lodging, water, and food. The contract specifies that the working day shall be ten hours per day, six days in the week; that there shall be five cooks; that a sufficient quantity of rice, pork, fish, beef and vegetables shall be furnished; that when a man falls sick he shall receive no wages, but provisions; and guarantees free return to San Francisco after the term of service. ... (“Arrival of 160 of Koopmanschap’s Celestials in St. Louis,” Cincinnati Daily Enquirer, August 24, 1870, 5)

For more on the Selma and Gulf Railroad, see Moore, “Railroad Building in Alabama,” 436. In March 1880 it was reported that “About three hundred hands, including twenty-five Chinese, are employed on the Shenandoah Railroad between Hagerstown [Maryland] and the bridge” (*Wheeling [WV] Register*, March 30, 1880, 3). The line would connect Roanoke, Virginia, to Hagerstown, Maryland. [n16, n70, n72, n104]

The *Galveston (TX) Tri-weekly News* reported in June 1870 that “[o]ne hundred and fifty Chinese laborers arrived at Omaha by railroad from San Francisco on the 14th en route for Algiers, La., under contract with Hon. Oak Ames and Ex-Gov. [Henry] Gardner of Massachusetts” to build the New Orleans, Mobile and Texas Railroad, a railroad the two men owned (“More Chinese,” *Galveston [TX] Tri-weekly News*, June 22, 1870, 1). The *B American Traveller* estimated their number at 200 (*American Traveller* [Boston], June 25, 1870, 2). The railroad was plagued by financial troubles, as numerous articles in the *Times-Picayune*

document (see, for example, “Seizure of the Railroad,” *Times-Picayune* [New Orleans], June 21, 1873, 4). [n53]

Chinese railroad workers helped construct several other lines in Texas, as well as the Southern Pacific Railroad. Marilyn Dell Brady notes in *The Asian Texans* that “Chinese made up the majority of crews working eastward from Langtry” on the Galveston, Harrisburg and San Antonio Railway in southern Texas (Marilyn Dell Brady, *The Asian Texans* [College Station: Texas A&M Press, 2004], 12). For more on the origins and the course of the railroad itself, see George C. Werner, “Galveston, Harrisburg and San Antonio Railway,” *Handbook of Texas Online*, accessed July 1, 2018, <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/eqg06>. For information on Chinese on the Houston and Texas Central Railway, see Lucy M. Cohen, *The Chinese in the Post-Civil War South: A People without a History* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1984), 84–85; Thomas W. Cutrer, “Walker, John George,” *Handbook of Texas Online*, accessed June 30, 2018, <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fwa20>; and Edward J. M. Rhoads, “Chinese,” *Handbook of Texas Online*, accessed June 30, 2018, <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/pjc01>. The Rhoads article contains useful information about Chinese on the Southern Pacific Railroad. See also Edward J. M. Rhoads, “The Chinese in Texas,” *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 81, no. 1 (July 1977): 1–36 (reprinted in Dirlik, *Chinese on the American Frontier*, 165–181). [n35, n37, n75]

Another key source for Chinese on the Southern Pacific Railroad is Alton K. Briggs, “The Archaeology of 1882 Labor Camps on the Southern Pacific Railroad, Val Verde County, Texas” (master’s thesis, Department of Anthropology, University of Texas, Austin, 1974). For a helpful overview of archaeological work on Southern Pacific sites, see Barbara Voss, “Archaeological Contributions to Research on Chinese Railroad Workers in America,” in Chang and Fishkin, *Chinese and the Iron Road*. For general background on the line, see Richard Orsi, *Sunset Limited: The Southern Pacific Railroad and the Development of the American West* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005). A useful primary source for contemporary comments about Chinese on the Southern Pacific Railroad is George Frederick Seward, *Chinese Immigration in Its Social and Economical Aspect* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1881). [n37, n41, n43, n75]

The Southern Pacific employed thousands of Chinese workers in California, Texas, Arizona, and elsewhere. In the view of the *Chicago Tribune*’s traveling correspondent Aaron About, who visited the line during its construction in 1882, Chinese workers on the Southern Pacific were “treated more like slaves than anything else.” “The negroes of the South,” About continued, “never were as inhumanly treated by their slave masters as have been the Chinese of California by Californians.” (Aaron About, “THE CHINESE. Their Wealth, Education, and Civilization— Shall We Encourage Chinese Immigration?—The Effect it Will Have on Our Population—The

Duty of the Government to Protect Them—Chinese House Servants and Laborers—John Chinaman Working Eastward,” *Chicago Tribune*, June 14, 1869, 2. About is referred to as the *Tribune’s* “traveling correspondent in the West” in *The Chicago Tribune: Its First Hundred Years*, vol. 2: 1865–1880, accessed July 1, 2018, <https://archive.org/stream/chicagotribune>. A special correspondent of the *Philadelphia Times* recorded a rather chilling story of how one labor boss terrorized all 6,000 Chinese workers under his charge (“6000 Chinamen. How They Are Controlled by One Man. Judge, Jury, Executioner. Some Incidents of the Work of the Southern Pacific Railroad,” *Philadelphia Times*,) March 13, 1882, 15. [n75]

The handful of Chinese working on the San Francisco and North Pacific Railroad in 1886 were likely discharged as a result of anti-Chinese sentiment in the area. Under the headline “Chinese at Tiburon,” the *Daily Alta California* reported that

[i]n regard to the anti-Chinese movement at Point Tiburon, Thomas W. Johnston, Secretary of the San Francisco and North Pacific Railroad, said yesterday morning that [James] Mervyn Donahue [President of the San Francisco and North Pacific Railroad] had received a communication from a committee appointed at the anti-Chinese meeting at Tiburon requesting the discharge of Chinese employed by the company at Tiburon Point. Mr. Donahue had told the committee that he would lay the matter before the Board of Directors. The Board will meet in a day or two, and the probability is that the Chinese will be dismissed. The company has always been against the employment of Chinese labor, and has employed Chinese only because of the competition afforded by the employment of Chinese by others. There are only fifteen Chinamen altogether at work at Tiburon. About one half are working on the steam shovel and the remainder are handling baggage. (Daily Alta California [San Francisco], February 4, 1886, 1) [n62]

The workforce who built the Monterey & Salinas Valley Railroad was half Chinese and half Caucasian. The line was built “in an attempt to circumvent the Southern Pacific,” by a group led by Carlisle S. Abbott, who “began work on a narrow gauge railroad, the Monterey & Salinas Valley Railroad, between Salinas and the deep water port at Monterey” in April 1874. “Groundbreaking was held on April 20, 1874 and later that day construction began under engineer John F. Kidder using 140 workers, half Caucasian and half Chinese. ... On October 23, 1874 the first train rolled, and the Monterey & Salinas Valley Railroad became the first narrow gauge to be operated in California” (“The Monterey & Salinas Valley Railroad,” Monterey County Historical Society website, accessed July 1, 2018, <http://mchsmuseum.com/railroadm&sv.html>). [n45, n73, n80, n83]

The first large group of Chinese immigrants to the upper Napa Valley were drawn to the area by jobs working in the gravel pits of the Napa Valley Railroad when the railroad reached St. Helena, California. The workers “were housed where they worked, next to the gravel pit.” Large amounts of gravel were needed from the local gravel quarry to lay down the base for the tracks (Mariam Hansen, “St. Helena’s Chinese Heritage,” St. Helena Historical Society website, accessed July 1, 2018, <http://www.shstory.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/Chinese-Heritage-of-St-Helena-by-Mariam-Hansen.pdf>). [n47]

Even in the Midwest, where other ethnic groups had previously dominated railroad construction, the Chinese were recruited as the ideal workforce during this period. Contemporary newspapers note work they did in Wisconsin and Ohio in 1869 and 1873. Some eight hundred Chinese were engaged “to work on the branch of the Ohio and Mississippi Railroad between Jeffersonville and North Vernon, Wisconsin” during the summer of 1869 (*Leavenworth [WI] Times*, July 22, 1869, 2; *Brooklyn [NY] Daily Eagle*, July 22, 1869, 1). And in July 1873, a *Cincinnati Enquirer* reporter found that a number of Chinese laborers in Morristown, Ohio, employed by the Cincinnati, Hamilton and Dayton Railroad were working in the railroad’s gravel pits. He conducted a fascinating, extended interview with the contractor supervising their work. When the reporter asked the contractor whether any of the men employed by him had worked on railroads before, the contractor said, “Yes; they are all-railroad hands. They served the time for which they contracted upon the Central Pacific, then went into the cutlery business, and are now back again at railroading.” He explained that the Chinese lost their jobs at the cutlery factory at the same time he was in need of workers on the railroad, so he hired them. When asked, “What advantage is gained in the employment of Chinese labor?” The contractor replied,

*[T]he great advantage is being able to depend upon them. They’re here under contract. They work so many hours a day. Ten hours. That we count on, week in and week out. That you can’t do with white laborers, no matter whether they’re Americans, Germans or Irish. The white laborers are too independent. If a thing doesn’t suit ‘em or if they have a row with their boss, the first thing they do is to ask for their time, and quit. That keeps the force at work in a gravel-pit constantly fluctuating. I have known a gang of 30 men at work, and if a picnic or a show came near them you couldn’t get 10 to work during the day, or for half a day at least. Consequently work would very often come to almost the complete standstill, and, as is usually the case, just at the time when you wanted it done the worst.” (“Our Celestial Cousins. How They Succeed in Ohio—A Reporter Interviews a Contractor and Learns,” *Indianapolis Sentinel*, July 9, 1873, 7)*

A brief comment two days earlier in the same newspaper referred to twenty-five Chinese living in Cincinnati being “engaged to go to Dayton to work upon a railroad” (*Indianapolis Sentinel*, July 7, 1873, 4.) While the white workers he supervised would quit work a half day early if a new show came to town, the only thing that could get the Chinese workers to depart from their usual pace of work was a reporter visiting their workplace. Aware of the fact that they’d be the subject of his story, they did even more work than usual in order to impress him. [n50, n99]

Wages and Lawsuits to Recover Wages

In addition to the contemporary newspaper articles and other sources cited in the essay’s notes, useful sources for information about the Chinese workers’ wages on rail lines in the United States after 1869 are Terry Boswell, Cliff Brown, John Brueggemann, and T. Ralph Peters Jr., *Racial Competition and Class Solidarity* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006), table 4.2, 75; Mary Roberts Coolidge, *Chinese Immigration* (1909; repr., New York: Arno Press, 1969), 366–367; and John R. Wunder, “The Chinese and the Courts in the Pacific Northwest: Justice Denied?” in *Chinese Immigrants and the Law*, edited by Charles McClain (Oxford, UK: Taylor & Francis, 1994), 451–452. The article by Wunder details a lawsuit by Chinese railroad workers against the Walla Walla railroad for back wages in 1878. Headlines in “Chinese and Japanese in the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, June 5, 1876, to December 31, 1889” include the following for 1878: “5/14 P.3 Chinadom in Court (242 Chinese Sue Seattle & Walla Walla Railroad for \$5,000 in Wages),” 19; and “11/28 P.3 Court (Ah Kow & 242 other Chinese vs. Seattle & Walla Walla Railroad),” 22.” In September 1878 the *Idaho Statesman* reported that “two hundred and forty-two Chinamen, employed on the Seattle and Walla Walla railroad from March 18 to December 17, 1877, have commenced suit against that road for their wages for that time, aggregating \$4,555.30.” They had done excavation grading for the railroad’s roadbed between Renton and Newcastle, Washington. The Wunder article notes that “[i]n a decision of far-reaching implications, the Washington territorial supreme court reversed the lower court which had held in favor of the Chinese laborers. In the opinion of the Supreme Court, only those Chinese specifically named in written contracts could collect (here the three labor bosses only). The immediate result was that Chinese laborers could not be assured of their wages unless they signed agreements with the original procurers of their services” (451–452). The Walla Walla case was not the only time that Chinese workers sued for back pay or breach of contract. In 1870 Chinese workers on the Houston and Central Texas railway “entered suit against their employers for wages and for a failure of compliance with contract” (“The Chinese and the Central Railroad,” *Galveston [TX] Tri-Weekly News*, September 2, 1870, 2). [n101, n103, n110]

Living Conditions

Comments by contemporary observers remain a useful source of information about how the Chinese railroad workers lived. For example, the *New York Sun* reported in 1876 that “[t]he pigtailed Celestials are housed in [Long Island Railroad] cars, which keep them company along the track. ...” (*New York Sun*, June 4, 1876, 1). But archaeologists’ investigations have added immeasurably to our understanding of the living conditions of the workers. Archaeologists have documented the presence of lean-tos, dugouts, tents, tent platforms, and cabins in Chinese railroad workers’ camps throughout the American West. See, for example, Barbara L. Voss, “The Historical Experience of Labor,” *Historical Archaeology* 49, no. 1 (2015): 12; John Molenda, “Aesthetically Oriented Archaeology,” paper presented at the Archaeology Network Workshop of the Chinese Railroad Workers in North America Project, Stanford University, Stanford, CA, 2013, 5; Briggs, *Archaeology of 1882 Labor Camps*, 53; Lyn Furnis and Mary L. Mainery, “An Archaeological Strategy for Chinese Workers’ Camps in the west: Method and Case Study,” *Historical Archaeology* 49, no. 1 (2015): 75, 82; R. Scott Baxter and Rebecca Allen, “The View from Summit Camp,” *Historical Archaeology* 49, no. 1 (2015): 36–39. In addition to documenting structures in which the workers lived, archaeologists have uncovered opium paraphernalia, including “opium containers, lamps, spatulas, vapor inhaler bowls, and pipe parts thought to be associated with the use of opium. All are Chinese in origin” (Briggs, *Archaeology of 1882 Labor Camps*, 83–88), as well as a range of residues and containers of Western and Chinese medicines that they used to soothe their aches and pains. See also Ryan Kennedy, Sarah Heffner, Virginia Popper, Ryan Harrod, and John Crandall, “The Health and Well-Being of Chinese Railroad Workers,” in Chang and Fishkin, *Chinese and the Iron Road*. [n121, n123]

Strikes

Key sources for information about strikes and other labor actions on these later lines are contemporary local newspaper reports. On the San Rafael Railroad in California in 1869, Chinese workers mounted a successful strike for shorter hours. A Boston periodical opined, “If any one supposes that ‘cheap Chinese labor’ means that the pig-tails are to work for less than other people, he should read the accounts of the recent strike of sixty Mongolian diggers on San Rafael Railroad, Cal. The point demanded was the reduction of the hours of labor from 11 to 10, and the celestials noisily discussed the encroachments of capital on labor until a compromise was effected” (*American Traveller* [Boston], September 11, 1869, 4). See also “Pacific Coast Doings,” *Hartford (CT) Daily Courant*, August 31, 1869, 3, for an example of the accounts to which this article refers. In 1875 the *San Francisco Bulletin* reported that “[t]he Chinamen employed on the Southern Pacific railroad at Calistoga, are again on a strike. This time it is on

account of the collection of poll taxes” (“Pacific Railroad Notes,” *San Francisco Bulletin*, October 22, 1875, 1). A strike by Chinese laborers in Siskiyou in northern California was reported in the *Los Angeles Herald* (“A Chinese Strike,” *Los Angeles Herald*, July 19, 1887, 1), as well as in a paper in Riverside. After noting that “[t]hree hundred Chinamen have struck at Siskiyou” in 1887, the Riverside, California, paper added, “How quickly the celestial learns terrestrial ways” (*Press and Horticulturalist* [Riverside, CA], July 23, 1887, 2). Within a year of the passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882, which had the effect of reducing the supply of available Chinese workers, Chinese railroad workers across the country were emboldened to strike for higher wages. The *Yreka (CA) Journal* was quoted in September 1883 as noting that a Central Pacific tunnel north of Redding was “progressing slowly, there being only about 2,000 Chinamen at work, the other 3,000 employed having gone off to seek better paying jobs. Those now at work were compelled to work or starve, and as soon as they get a little ahead to buy a supply of provisions, they are expected to strike again. The Chinese exclusion bill here has made Chinamen demand higher wages” (*Rocky Mountain News* [Denver], September 7, 1883, 2.) In 1889 Southern Pacific Railroad officials received word that “Chinese section hands are demanding higher wages than have ever been paid before, wages about equal to those received by white men” (*Fresno [CA] Morning Republican*, July 11, 1889, 3). [n136, n138]

Reprinting of Articles about Chinese Railroad Workers after Promontory

The frequent reprinting of articles about Chinese workers in all regions of the country attests to the nation’s lively interest in news about Chinese railroad workers between 1869 and 1889, as the brief survey that follows suggests.

No article was reprinted as widely as “The Chinaman as Railroad Builder,” which first appeared fifteen days after the completion of the transcontinental railroad on May 10, 1869. The following publications in which it appeared are only some of the dozens of newspapers and journals that reprinted this article (unless otherwise indicated these pieces ran under the title “The Chinaman as Railroad Builder”): *Idaho Statesman* (Boise), May 25, 1869, 3; *Weekly Advocate* (Baton Rouge, LA), June 7, 1869, 1; *Cincinnati Commercial Tribune*, June 7, 1869; [no title], *Marietta (GA) Journal*, June 11, 1869, 2; *Columbus (GA) Daily Enquirer*, June 13, 1869, 1; “The Chinese as Railroad Builders,” *Springfield (MA) Republican*, June 16, 1869, 4; *Morning Republican* (Little Rock, AR), June 21, 1869, 2; *Albany (NY) Evening Journal*, June 26, 1869, 1; *Daily Nebraska Press* (Nebraska City), June 30, 1869, 2; *Washington (PA) Reporter*, July 21, 1869, 2; *New-Bedford Mercury* (New Bedford, MA), July 4, 1869, 6; *Daily Iowa State Register* (Des Moines), July 9, 1869, 2; “John Chinaman. The Chinese Coolie as Railroad Builder,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, September 24, 1869, 3; *Scientific American*, July 31, 1869, 75; “The Chinaman as a Railroad Builder,” *American Railroad Journal* 42 (1869): 786. [n3]

An article by Henry George entitled “The Chinese in America” that celebrated Chinese railroad workers’ intelligence, work ethic, steadiness, dependability, personal discipline, strength, endurance, precision, and skill ran in *Crisis* (Columbus, Ohio) 9, no. 18 (May 26, 1869): 142. It may not be especially surprising that portions of it were reprinted in newspapers in California and Georgia (“Pacific Coast Despatches,” *Daily Alta California* [San Francisco], July 13, 1869, 1; “The Coming Man: John Chinaman in America,” *Marietta* [GA] *Journal*, June 11, 1869, 2. It is worth noting that the article also was reprinted in such far-flung locales as New Zealand and England (“Chinese Labour,” *Otago* [New Zealand] *Daily Times*, August 12, 1869, 3; “Chinese Labour in America,” *Engineering: An Illustrated Weekly Journal* (London, England), May 28, 1869, 360). [n1]

An article about the Chinese coming to New Jersey to construct a portion of the Midland Railroad in a particularly “rocky and uncultivated” region that ran in the *Trenton Gazette* on September 23, 1870, was reprinted in the *Hartford* (CT) *Daily Courant*, September 24, 1870, 3; the *Weekly Advocate* (Baton Rouge, LA), October 1, 1870, 3; the *Houston Daily Union*, September 24, 1870, 2; the *Galveston* (TX) *Tri-Weekly News*, April 6, 1870, 4; and the *New Republic* (Camden, NJ), October 8, 1870. [n94]

In June and July 1870 newspapers around the country noted that Chinese workers were being “extensively introduced” on the Union Pacific, particularly west of Cheyenne, Wyoming, repairing the line, and in the railroad’s coal-mining operations, as well—a fact that was prompting indignation and threats on the part of displaced European American workers. Articles appeared in *Prairie Farmer* (Chicago), June 11, 1870, 184; *Washington* (PA) *Review and Examiner*, July 27, 1870, 1; *Baltimore Sun*, June 6, 1870, 1; *Jackson* (MI) *Citizen Patriot*, July 14, 1870, 2; *Cleveland Leader*, June 6, 1870, 1; and *Philadelphia Inquirer*, June 6, 1870, 4. [n13]

A news squib about Chinese workers being brought to New York to relay the tracks of the Rockway branch of the Long Island Railroad ran in the *New York Sun* on July 4, 1876 (“Chinese Workers for Seventy Cents a Day,” *New York Sun*, June 4, 1876, 1). Snippets of this article were picked up around the country in papers in California, Maryland, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Missouri, Ohio, Oregon, and elsewhere. For example, the *Oregonian* reported that “[a]bout 120 newly imported Chinamen went to work on the Long Island Railroad at 70 cents per day” (“Chinese in New York,” *Oregonian* [Portland], June 6, 1876, 1). The *Cincinnati Inquirer* wrote, “The Chinese have at last appeared as railroad laborers on this side of the continent. Over a hundred of them have been at work relaying the rails of the Rockaway branch of the Long Island railroad. *N.Y. Sun*” (*Cincinnati Inquirer*, June 7, 1876, 2). The identical squib ran in the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, June 8, 1876, 3, and the *Marysville* (CA) *Daily Appeal*, June 14, 1876, as well as in other papers. [n97]

A report that “[s]ix or eight hundred Chinese have been engaged to work on the branch of the Ohio and Mississippi Railroad between Jeffersonville and North Vernon, Wisconsin” appeared not only in the *Leavenworth (WI) Times* (July 22, 1869, 2), but also in the *Brooklyn (NY) Daily Eagle*, which ran with the higher number: “Eight hundred Chinamen are engaged on the branch of the Ohio and Mississippi Railroad” (*Brooklyn [NY] Daily Eagle*, July 22, 1869, 1). [n53]

The *New London (CT) Democrat* reported in December 1869 that “[t]he California and Oregon and Yuba railroad companies have consolidated under the name of the California and Oregon Railroad Company, with a capital of \$15,000,000. Work on the road is being vigorously prosecuted. Three hundred and fifty additional Chinese laborers were placed at work. Fifty one miles are now completed and in running order from the junction with the Central Pacific Railroad to Roseville” (*New London [CT] Democrat*, December 25, 1869, 2). The *Daily Alta California* did not get around to running that information until nearly a month later (“California—Marysville. There are two or three hundred Chinese laborers recently employed on the California and Oregon Railroad Company, in this city.” “California—Marysville,” *Daily Alta California* [San Francisco], January 24, 1870, 1). [n18]

The frequent presence of news about Chinese railroad workers in the United States that appeared in hundreds of publications across the country during the two decades after the first transcontinental railroad was completed attests to the keen interest that Americans had in the Chinese laborers who were doing so much to help build the rail infrastructure of the nation.

Appendix A

Railroads the Chinese Helped Build, Rebuild, and Maintain between 1869 and 1889

The following list of railroads on which the Chinese worked during this period is by no means complete. Rather, it is a preliminary list of railroads for which there is a paper trail about the role of the Chinese in their construction. Readers who are aware of other railroads that should be on this list are encouraged to contact the Chinese Railroad Workers in North America Project at Stanford University (<http://web.stanford.edu/group/chineserailroad/cgi-bin/website/>).

Chinese worked on at least the following eleven lines in the second half of 1869: California and Oregon Railroad; California Pacific Railroad; East Side Railroad; Northern Pacific Railroad; Ohio and Mississippi Railroad; Oregon and California Railroad; Oregon Central Railroad; San Rafael and San Quentin Railroad; Texas and Pacific Railway; Virginia and Truckee Railroad; Western Pacific Railroad.

They worked on at least the following thirty-six lines in the 1870s: Alabama and Chattanooga Railroad; California Central Narrow Gauge Railroad; Carson Tahoe Railroad; Cincinnati, Hamilton, and Dayton Railroad; Denver Pacific Railroad; Eureka and Palisade Railroad; Houston and Texas Central Railroad; Long Island Railroad; Los Angeles and Independence Railroad; Memphis and Selma Railroad; Mendocino Railroad; Midland Railroad; Monterey and Salinas Valley Railroad; Nevada County Narrow Gauge Railroad; New Orleans, Mobile, and Texas Railroad; North Pacific Coast Railroad; Pacific Coast Railway; Puyallup Railroad; San Diego and San Bernardino Railroad; San Luis Railroad; San Luis Obispo and Santa Maria Valley Railroad; Santa Clara Valley Railroad; Santa Cruz Railroad; Santa Cruz and Felton Railroad; Seattle and Walla Walla Railroad; Selma and Gulf Railroad; Selma, Rome, and Dalton Railroad; South Pacific Coast Railroad; Southern Pacific Railroad; Stockton and Copperopolis Railroad; Thurston County Railroad; Utah and Pleasant Valley Railroad; Utah, Idaho and Montana Railroad; Utah Northern Railroad; Walla Walla and Columbia River Railroad; West Side Railroad.

They worked on at least the following twenty-three lines in the 1880s: Bodie and Benton Railroad; California Southern Railroad (Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe); Carson and Colorado Railroad; Celilo and Wallula Railroad; Clear Lake and San Francisco Railroad; Coronado Railroad; Cuyamaca and Eastern Railroad; Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad; Echo and Park City Railroad; Fremont, Elkhorn, and Missouri Valley Railroad; Galveston, Harrisburg, and San Antonio Railroad; Great Northern Railway; Lake Valley Railroad; Loma Prieta Railroad; Napa Valley Railroad; Nevada–California–Oregon Railroad; Oregon Pacific Railroad (formerly Corvallis and Yaquina Railroad); Oregon Railway and Navigation Company; Rutherford and

Clear Lake; San Francisco and North Pacific Railroad; Shenandoah Railroad; Sierra Valley and Mohawk Railroad; Yosemite Mountain Sugar Pine Railroad.

The Chinese also worked on the Central Pacific and the Union Pacific during these decades.

Appendix B

Contemporary Newspapers and Periodicals

The following contemporary newspapers and periodicals were sources of key documentation:

Alexandria (VA) Gazette

American Railroad Journal

American Traveller (Boston)

Baltimore Sun

Belle Plaine (KS) News

Belvidere (IL) Standard

Blackfoot (ID) Register

Boston Daily Advertiser

Brooklyn (NY) Daily Eagle

California Farmer and Journal of Useful Sciences

Camden (NJ) Democrat

Charleston (SC) News and Courier

Chattanooga (AL) Times

Chicago Tribune

Cincinnati Daily Enquirer

Cincinnati Gazette

Cincinnati Inquirer

Cleveland Leader

Cleveland Plain Dealer

Columbus (GA) Daily Enquirer

Coronado (CA) Times

Crisis (Columbus, OH)

Daily Alta California (San Francisco)

Daily Constitutionalist (Augusta, GA)

Daily Courier (San Bernardino, CA)

Daily Evening Bulletin (San Francisco)

Daily Inter Ocean (Chicago)

Daily Phoenix (Columbia, SC)

Daily Rocky Mountain Gazette (Helena, MT)

Elkhart (IN) Weekly Review

Emporia (KS) Weekly News

Evansville (IN) Courier and Press

Farmer's Cabinet (Amherst, NH)

Flake's Weekly Galveston (TX) Bulletin

Fresno (CA) Morning Republican

Galveston (TX) Tri-weekly News

Harper's Bazaar

Harrisburg (PA) Patriot

Hartford (CT) Daily Courant

Helena (MT) Weekly Herald

Houston Daily Union

Humboldt (CA) Register

Idaho Semi-Weekly World (Idaho City)

Idaho Statesman

Indianapolis Sentinel

Jackson (MI) Citizen

Jackson (MI) Citizen Patriot

Jackson City Patriot (Jackson, MI)

Kalamazoo (MI) Gazette

Lake Village Times (Laconia, NH)

Leavenworth (WI) Times

Los Angeles Herald

Marietta (GA) Journal

Marysville (CA) Daily Appeal

Massachusetts Spy (Worcester)

Morning Republican (Little Rock, AR)

Napa Register

National Aegis (Worcester, MA)

National Labor Tribune (Pittsburgh, PA)

Nevada City (CA) Transcript

Nevada State Journal (Reno)

New Hampshire Patriot and State Gazette (Concord)

New Haven (CT) Register

New London (CT) Democrat

New Orleans Times

New Republic (Camden, NJ),

New Southwest and Grant County Herald (Silver City, NM)

New-York Daily Tribune

New York Evangelist

New York Evening Post

New York Sun

New York Times

New York Tribune

New York World

Ogden (UT) Junction

Omaha Herald

Oregon State Journal (Eugene)

Oregonian (Portland)

Otago Daily Times (Otago, New Zealand)

Owyhee Daily Avalanche (Silver City, ID)

Philadelphia Inquirer

Philadelphia Times

Pittsburgh (PA) Daily Commercial Appeal

Portland Oregonian

Prairie Farmer (Chicago)

Press and Horticulturalist (Riverside, CA)

Railroad Gazette

Reno (NV) Gazette-Journal

Richmond (VA) Whig

Rocky Mountain News (Denver, CO)

Russian River Flag (Healdsburg, CA)

Sacramento Daily Union

Saginaw (MI) News

San Diego Downtown News

San Francisco Chronicle

St. Cloud (MN) Journal

St. Helena (CA) Star

St. Louis Democrat

Salt Lake Tribune

San Bernardino (CA) Daily Courier

San Diego Union

San Diego Union Tribune

San Francisco Bulletin

San Francisco Chronicle

San Francisco Daily Morning Chronicle

Santa Cruz (CA) Weekly Sentinel

Sausalito Weekly Herald

Scientific American

Seattle Post-Intelligencer

Silver Reef (UT) Miner

Tehachapi (CA) News

Times-Picayune (New Orleans)

Trenton (NJ) State Gazette

Washington (PA) Review and Examiner

Weekly Advocate (Baton Rouge, LA)

Weekly Hawk-eye (Burlington, IA)

Weekly Journal-Miner (Prescott, AZ)

Weekly Nevada State Journal (Reno)

Weekly Nonpareil (Council Bluffs, IA)

Weekly Oregon Statesman (Salem)

Wheeling (WV) Register

Wilkes-Barre (PA) Times Leader

Yreka (CA) Journal