

CELADON SLOPE GARDEN
 CIRCA 1870 - 1902
 A CHINESE SOJOURNER OCCUPATION
 ON THE
 PAYETTE NATIONAL FOREST



Chinese Coin

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Introduction

The purpose for this report is to inform the interested reader about what is presently known about this historic property listed on the National Register of Historic Places (O'Brien Reed 1989). The artifacts of Chinese origin found at the Celadon Slope Garden (10IH1566) are herein described and curated at the Supervisor's Office, Payette National Forest, McCall, Idaho. The Chinese artifacts found at the Celadon Slope Garden site are associated to the immigrant Chinese population. These resident Chinese may have been responsible for creating the terraced gardens, hay field and irrigation network found at the Celadon Slope Gardens, a turn of century historic site.

The Site

The Celadon Slope Garden and the U.S. Forest Service Administrative Site, Hays Staton are located on one of the few level areas on China Mountain. Warren, Idaho is about 8 miles to the northwest and higher in elevation from the Celadon Slope Garden. Proximity to Warren was a critical marketing factor in the garden site's location. Warren was a major market for produce cultivated in the Warren Gold Mining District. Selection of the Celadon Garden site was probably influenced by the moderate grade of the ground surface, southeastern exposure and the presence of three nearby permanent water sources; China Creek, "K" Creek and a spring located below the irrigated hay field.

The word "Celadon" is a name for a type of ceramic manufactured in China (LaLande 1981:103). Fragments of Celadon tableware were found in the site called the Celadon Slope Garden (Fee 1986:12). The Celadon Slope Garden is the uppermost of three terraced gardens on the southeastern aspect of China Mountain. The upper portion of the Celadon Slope Garden where the Chinese artifacts were found is at 4800 feet above sea level (asl). Below the garden area is a hay field. The elevation at the lower end of the hay field is at 4600 feet asl.

The South Fork of the Salmon River is one linear mile downslope from the Celadon Slope Garden at 2800 feet asl. Celadon Slope Garden occupies approximately 1 acre of terraced gardens above 11 acres of hay field. The three large garden terraces and a portion of the upper hay field were once irrigated by a diversion ditch from China Creek. Below the three large garden terraces and upper portion of the hay field is more of the same seeded hay field that was once cultivated and irrigated by another diversion ditch from "K" Creek. Below the hay field within the coniferous forest, there is a spring seep with two small terraces located immediately below the spring. A coniferous forest surrounds the 12 acre agricultural area. The artifacts of Chinese origin found at the Celadon Slope Garden site, as themselves do not suggest that the Chinese were farming the terraced garden and hay field. The artifacts suggest a temporary occupation of the place.

The nineteenth century Chinese immigrant population is unique in American and Idaho history because of the majority of Chinese planned on staying in America only temporarily. The Chinese sojourner came to the American West during the gold rush to make a fortune and return to China and their native province Kwangtung. Their stay in America was regarded as an economic necessity (O'Brien Reed 1989:21). The majority of Chinese sojourners had no intention in assimilating into the "greater wider society" of American culture. However, we must keep in mind that some Chinese stayed in America and had no intention of returning to China and some did become acculturated and became American citizens.

Gold was discovered at Warren, Idaho in 1862 and the first Chinese immigrants are recorded in the vicinity around 1870 (Elsenshon 1965:79). After the easily retrievable gold was depleted, companies of Chinese placer miners replaced Euro-Americans. The United States (U.S.) Census records for Idaho County in 1870 lists 367 Chinese. The Chinese population in Warren peaked in 1880 at 394, then dropped to 6 in 1910 (U.S. Census 1870, 1880, 1900, 1910).

The Chinese of Warren, like other sojourners in the United States, placed a high value on maintaining traditional diet and lifestyle. The number of Chinese miners in the Warren Mining District encouraged the growth of service oriented businesses related to this ethnic market (O'Brien Reed 1989:4). There was a small permanent community of Chinese and Euro-Americans in the Warren Mining District. This population increased every summer with an influx of Chinese miners who wintered in Portland, Oregon. The 1870 U.S. Census lists placer mining as the major Chinese occupation in the Warren Mining District (U.S. Bureau of Census 1870). By 1880 there are four farmers and three gardeners counted among Chinese residents in the Warren area (U.S. Bureau of Census 1880). The Chinese farmers and gardeners probably created the Celadon Slope Garden soon after the initial Chinese immigration to the Warren area (O'Brien Reed 1989:21).

It is assumed that the Chinese sojourners cleared the pine forest from the land, tilled the soil, terraced and irrigated the fields. Prior to the reoccupation of this agricultural site by Charles B. Hayes in 1902, "former occupants" are referred to in a U.S. Department of Agriculture, Idaho National Forest, Application For Permit, No. 6121, dated January 29, 1909.

"The ditch mentioned has previously been constructed by former occupants of the premises the latter being Chas. B. Hayes from whom the Forest Service purchased the improvements" (Payette NF 1909).

Were the "former occupants" mentioned in the 1909 Application For Permit Chinese sojourners? Evidence in support of this suggestion includes artifacts of Chinese origin. A Chinese presence can be surmised, based upon the kind and variety of artifacts found on an occupational site. If the Chinese artifacts were not present at the garden site there would have been no evidence to suggest that the Chinese had ever been using the Celadon Slope terraced garden and hay field.

Contributing cultural features at the Celadon Slope Garden and Hays Station, include three clearly defined large garden terraces, two small terraces, several shallow irrigated ditches that meander through the terraces and hay field, a scatter of artifacts, three rock cairns originating from field clearing, a log barn ruin, a framed cabin ruin, a log cabin called Hays Station, trash middens and what appears to be two semi-subterranean root cellars. Most of the mentioned contributing cultural features are not of Chinese origin. The root cellars, also referred to as earth depressions, may or may not have been used by the Chinese, but may have been used by Charles B. Hayes and the U.S. Forest Service for storing garden produce and other perishable foods. The log barn was used to store hay and shelter horses, and the Hays Station log cabin was built by the Forest Service to serve as a U.S. Forest Service Ranger Station Headquarters. Mr. Hayes name was given to Hays Station. Over the years the "e" in Hays has been lost.

In a Idaho National Forest document dated July 12, 1908, there is a reference to Hays Station. In this document to the Forester, Washington DC, the following questions were asked. Has planting site been cultivated? If so, what was or is raised?

"Red clover, timothy and orchard grass, potatoes, cabbage, beets, hardy vegetables." Also, mentioned further in this document, "This station already has some small fruit, strawberries, and raspberries on it." (Hayes R.S. Letter 1908).

Today, black raspberries exist in the lower hay field. Wild strawberries are present in the meadow and at the edge of the coniferous forest. Herbs have been identified and include caraway and dill. Carrot has also been observed.

The above mentioned vegetables would need a cold storage for preservation. It was surmised that the Chinese sojourners constructed one of the larger earth depressions assumed to be a semi-subterranean cold storage found above the terraced garden area. To explore this notion, Forest archaeologists conducted an archaeological excavation within the earth depression which was in close proximity to where the majority of the Chinese artifacts were discovered. An abundance of artifacts were recovered from the depression. However, none of the artifacts were of Chinese origin and appeared not to be associated to the Chinese occupation. Archaeologists speculated that the artifacts found within the depression were dumped. This dump is a secondary trash deposit. It is assumed that at one time, probably around the 1930's - 40's, unauthorized occupants at the Hays Station may have cleaned out the abandoned log cabin and removed the trash to the earth depression. The recovered artifacts consisted of a variety of items. These artifacts consisted of metal, glass, leather, bone and charred wood. The age of the items appear to date to about 1910 to 1940 and post date the Chinese occupation. The Chinese artifacts were found only 10 meters south of the earth walled semi-subterranean cold storage and secondary trash deposit. These Chinese artifacts were found within a graded dirt road and erosion control ditch. A report pertaining to this excavation is on file at the Supervisor's Office, Payette National Forest, McCall, Idaho.

The Chinese artifacts were found fragmented and scattered over the modern road surface and within a relief ditch. Contemporary road grading, occasional maintenance and a erosion control relief ditch exposed the Chinese artifacts. The recovered Chinese artifacts consisted of six different types of Chinese manufactured ceramics, opium container fragments, and one brass coin. Also in association with the Chinese artifacts are burnt and unburnt bone fragments. Two pieces of large canines were identified as belonging to domestic swine. There were other non-Chinese artifacts collected from the area of the Chinese artifact scatter and consisted of machine cut nails, beverage bottle glass and contemporary American dish fragments. The non-Chinese items were poorly provenienced when collected. No report was generated explaining how one artifact related to the other. The lack of information makes it difficult to place the non-Chinese artifacts in any association with the Chinese artifact scatter. The artifacts that came directly from the Chinese artifact scatter are described later in this report.

The types of artifacts found here suggests that the Chinese were preparing and eating food at this locus. Opium smoking paraphernalia found in the form of ceramic pipe bowl parts and pieces of a container that once held opium, suggest at least a temporary occupation. Only one brass coin of Chinese origin was found within the graded road.

It has been surmised that the Celadon Slope Garden and hay field were abandoned by the Chinese prior to 1902 when Charles B. Hayes constructed a log cabin and raised horses on the site. Hayes gave his land rights to the U.S. Forest Service on June 30, 1908. On that date, what was then known as the Payette Forest Reserve became the Idaho National Forest. Hays Station served as a Ranger Station for the Warren District of the Idaho National Forest from 1908 to 1918. The garden and hay field areas were reused to cultivate vegetables and hay by the Ranger and his family. The Ranger District Headquarters was moved to Warren, Idaho around 1918 and the station was abandoned.

The Hays Station log cabin and agricultural fields were again reoccupied by the public as a habitation and grazing property from 1918 until the late 1940's. Over the years the terraced garden area became obscured by tall grasses and a young stand of Ponderosa pines. The vegetation contributed to the preservation of the stepped earth terraces. In 1989 and 1990 Forest Service personnel thinned and pruned limbs of the young Ponderosa pines growing in the meadow and upon the terraces. The young pine forest now retains a park environment and the public can walk throughout the site and see the garden terraces and shallow irrigation ditches.

The Celadon Slope Garden along with other confirmed Chinese gardens represents the successful adaptation of traditional Chinese horticultural technology to the terrain of the Salmon River Mountains in Idaho. These gardens reflect efforts of the 19th century Chinese immigrants to maintain their ethnic lifeways, diet and identity while engaging in a commercially profitable enterprise (O'Brien Reed 1989:21).

Artifacts Of Chinese Manufacture

The following artifact catalog pertains to the items that were found directly on the graded road and within the erosion control relief ditch. Descriptions of these artifacts are as follows:

CHINESE CERAMICS

Brown Glazed Stoneware

Accession Number: 10IH1566:1

Number of specimen: 13 fragments.

Description: 3 base fragments that fit together.

8 body fragments

2 rim fragments

This stoneware is a type of pottery mass produced in China for many hundreds of years. This pottery was being manufactured in China and marketed in the United States until recent times. This stoneware is made on a wheel and fired once then glazed and fired again. This stoneware is made into a variety of forms to contain a variety of foods. The fired clay is refined and has an ivory colored hue. Interior and exterior surface treatment has been covered with a light to medium to dark brown colored vitreous glaze. It appears that all of the fragments may have originated from a single pot. It may have been a shouldered food jar.

Measurements

Length: 11.7 - 74.0 mm

Width: 10.0 - 66.6 mm

Thickness: 4.1 - 15.0 mm

Reference: LaLande 1981:161

Wegars 1988:2

Kingsbury 1989:9

Payette National Forest comparative collection.

Dark Brown Glazed Stoneware

Accession Number: 10IH1566.2

Number of Specimen: 18 body fragments and 1 rim fragment.

Description: These specimen were identified by the dark brown vitreous glaze on the exterior. The interior glaze has a lighter brown color. The rim shard suggests that these fragments represent the traditional shaped beverage bottle that once held an alcoholic beverage.

Measurements

Length: 13.2 - 42.2 mm

Width: 7.0 - 31.8 mm

Thickness: 2.2 - 11.3 mm

References: LaLande 1981:161

Wegars 1988:2

Payette National Forest comparative collection.

Blue Flower Ware (bowl)

Accession Number: 10IH1566:3

Number of Specimen: 2 base fragments; 9 body fragments and 6 rim fragments.

Description: All of these fragments probably represent a single bowl of Chinese manufacture. Exterior and interior markings identify this fragmented bowl as "blue flower ware" also known as "three circles and dragonfly ware." These fragments are characterized by a bluish gray overall glaze with sub-glazed blue markings. On one base fragment there are three parallel lines executed around the exterior base. On a rim body fragment, two blue parallel lines are present. Blue leaf marks are present on five fragments.

Measurements

Length: 10.2 - 58.8 mm

Width: 5.6 - 39.7 mm

Thickness: 3.2 - 9.0 mm

References: LaLande 1981:217

Wegars 1988:4

Kingsbury 1988:9

Payette National Forest comparative collection.

Celadon Ware

Accession Number: 10IH1566:4

Number of Specimen: 12 fragments

Description: The exterior colors of this Chinese porcelain is light green or winter green. The collected fragments represent pieces that originated from a bowl and a spoon used as tableware. All of the fragments have glazed green on the exterior with a green white glaze on the interior.

Measurements

Length: 10.6 - 38.0 mm

Width: 4.8 - 33.0 mm

Thickness: 2.7 - 5.1 mm

References: LaLande 1981:4

Wegars 1988:4

Payette National Forest comparative collection.

Four Seasons Ware

Accession Number: 10IH1566.5

Number of Specimen: 1 fragment

Description: This Chinese porcelain has a light blue glaze on both surfaces and is decorated with red and green color. This fragment originated from a tableware bowl of an undetermined size.

Measurements

Length: 23.2 - 23.4 mm

Width: 8.5 - 9.3 mm

Thickness: 2.7 - 3.3 mm

References: Weggars 1988:4

Payette National Forest comparative collection.

Ceramic Opium Smoking Pipe Bowl

Accession Number: 10IH1566:6

Number of Specimen: 7 fragments

Description: These fragments appear to represent pieces from three different pipe bowls. This determination is based upon color. These colors range from dark gray, bright red with a brighter red glaze to reddish gray. Finger prints of the manufacturer are present.

Measurements

Length: 8.9 - 28.3 mm

Width: 6.9 - 22.5 mm

Thickness: 1.8 - 9.0 mm

References: LaLande 1981:219

Weggars 1988:5

Wylie and Higgins 1987

Kingsbury 1989:9

Payette National Forest comparative collection.

Chinese Coin

Accession Number: 10IH1566:7

Number of Specimen: 1

Description: The mint characters are clear on the obverse and its numismatic identification is certain. This coin was examined on June 25, 1990 by Margie Akin of the California Asian Numismatic Survey at the University of California, Riverside. The origin of the coin is China. The mint is Hangchow, Chekiang, (Zhejiang Province). The coin was minted during the Reign of Tao Kuang from 1821 to 1850. The coin is made of brass which is an alloy of copper and zinc. Surface oxidation is present in the form of rust. Coin diameter is 19.5 mm. Condition has been determined as very good. Denomination is a wen (Margie Akin 1990 personal communication). Cash coins of this type are casted rather than struck, resulting in small projections on their edges where molten metal entered the mold. See Figure 1 a.

Reference: Kingsbury:1989 comparative collection.

Akin:1990 personal communication.

Opium Can

Accession Number: 10IH1566:8

Number of Specimen: 1 lid and 2 fragments

Description: The 2 fragments were found in the road with the other fragmented Chinese ceramics. Found within the Hays Station was one brass lid of an opium can embossed by a stamp revealing Chinese idiograms. The embossed stamp refers to the name of the manufacturer or trademark. The embossed idiograms are faint and difficult to read. See Figure 1 b.

References: Kingsbury 1989:10

Payette National Forest comparative collection.

Faunal Remains

Accession Number; 10IH1566.9

Number of Specimen: 10 fragments

Description: There are eight long bone fragments which are unidentifiable and two portions of split canine (tusks) belonging to domestic swine. These items were found in direct association with other Chinese artifacts.

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Chinese Coin (a)



(b)

Opium Can Lid

Figure 1. Artifacts from the Celadon Slope
Garden Site.