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Case Study: The US – China Trader

Frolic

Although the US – China trade gradually began to alter and atrophy during the mid-nineteenth century, the California Gold Rush and its accompanying westward migration briefly revitalised trade between America and China, creating a new and growing market for Chinese export goods (Terry and Pastron 1990:80). It was within this context that the Baltimore clipper *Frolic* was re-tasked from its previous employment as an opium runner and sent with its crew to Gold Rush San Francisco. Although it failed to reach its destination, instead wrecking nearly sixty miles north of the city, its story and the archaeological remains associated with its cargo and crew illustrate and exemplify the character and complexity of the US – China trade during this time. This chapter places *Frolic* within the context of the California Gold Rush and the US – China trade at large. It also presents previous archaeological work on the shipwreck *Frolic*, which has enabled this thesis to understand the wider implications of this ship, American consumer society, and the US – China trade.

Gold Rush San Francisco

The Gold Rush, which was initiated with the discovery of gold in John Sutter's Mill on 24 January 1848, gave life to, and transformed, San Francisco from a sleepy outpost to a bustling entrepôt (Rohrbough 1997:1; Pastron 1990b:6; Delgado 2006). New settlers, cultures, traditions, tastes and attitudes were continually being introduced into San Francisco by the ships that constantly arrived in its harbour (Delgado 1990:28). Alpheus B. Thompson, who had been operating trading ventures between Canton and California for many years, wrote to his mother about the

transformation of California from its pastoral days to the excitement of the Gold Rush:

I was at on the of the Gold 'Placers' last Year (not to dig Gold) on a trading expedition with eight Wagon [sic] loads of Goods with which I did well, but have no desire to go there again, as the Mines are now filled with all Classes of People from all parts of the Globe, yet strange to say good Order has as yet prevailed and hope it will for the future... (Letter from Alpheus B. Thompson to Mrs. Lydia Thompson 1 June 1850, in Brown 1947:49-55).

Moreover, this population explosion was accompanied by haphazard and chaotic building activity (Hattori and Bringham 1990:35-57; Pastron 1990b:8). Real estate skyrocketed and shacks and shanties were constructed haphazardly (Hattori and Bringham 1990:35; Pastron 1990b:10). This rapid and often times chaotic growth is readily visible in contemporary lithographs and paintings of the San Francisco waterfront. In this way, Figure 12 depicts San Francisco's harbour sometime between the years 1846 and 1847. Only six ocean-going sailing vessels are in the harbour. There is no substantial waterfront district or wharf and the landscape is dotted with only a few dozen buildings. By 1849, as depicted in Figure 13, the harbour contains 25 or so ocean-going sailing ships, and the San Francisco waterfront has at least one wharf. Additionally, there are many more houses and buildings. By 1850, as depicted in Figure 14, ships are lined up in the harbour to deliver people and goods, as the harbour is not large enough to accommodate them all at once.



Figure 12. *View of San Francisco [California] formerly Yerba Buena in 1846-47 (circa 1847) lithograph by Captain William F. Swasey (from the Robert B. Honeyman, Jr. Collection of Early Californian and Western American Pictorial Material, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley).*



Figure 13. *San Francisco [California], 1849 (1849) lithograph by Henry Firks (from the Robert B. Honeyman, Jr. Collection of Early Californian and Western American Pictorial Material, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley).*

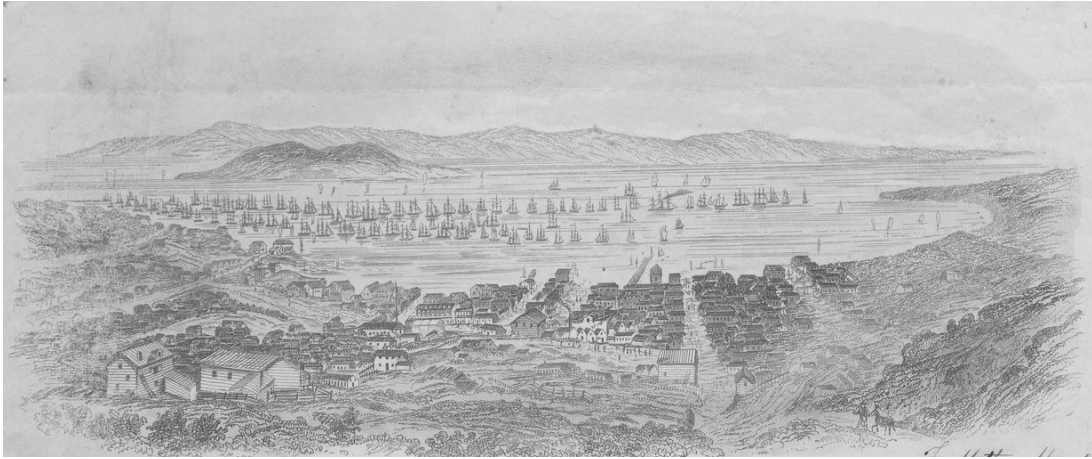


Figure 14. *City of San Francisco [California]* (1850) engraving by J. Clark (from the Robert B. Honeyman, Jr. Collection of Early Californian and Western American Pictorial Material, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley).

The San Francisco waterfront was not deep enough, nor did it have enough warehouses or wharves for the many ships arriving in the harbour to unload their goods. Ships were turned into warehouses and other types of establishments. For example, the ship *Niantic* was turned into the Niantic Hotel (Delgado 2006; Pastron and Harroti 1990). Figure 15 depicts two deserted ships turned into storehouses, one of them being the Niantic Hotel, alongside several other buildings including Snooks, Eagle Saloon, Bubb, Grub & Co., and Boggs. There are Spaniards and Chinese in the foreground.



Figure 15. *High and Dry* (1855) lithograph by Francis Samuel Marryat (from the collection of Chinese in California, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley).

Figure 15 also illustrates the constellation of ethnicities and socio-cultural groups from across the US and abroad who came to inhabit San Francisco (Rohrbough 1997:3; Pastron 1990a:2). Argonauts from many walks of life, rich and poor, businessmen and labourers, women and children, immigrated to California hoping to strike it rich (Rohrbough 1997:3; Pastron 1990a:2; Beiber 1948:3). Those caught up in this migration were of many different ethnic and socio-cultural groups, including Americans from the eastern seaboard, Englishmen, Frenchmen, Germans, Turks, Slavs, Mexicans, South Americans, Chinese, Australians, Hawaiians, Jews, Africans, and African-Americans (Pastron 1990b:8).

Ships were continually arriving in San Francisco with Gold Rush settlers, creating a melting pot of different socio-cultural groups who needed material goods to maintain their disparate ways of life (Delgado 1990:28). Figure 16 illustrates this diversity and the role of material culture within it, depicting people of several ethnicities camped outside of San Francisco at the foot of Telegraph Hill. Around the tent on the far left sits a group of male miners, one of whom is boiling a pot of water. One of them appears to be Native American. Around the second tent from the left are a group of Chinese men, as indicated by their dress and hairstyles. In the middle of the picture a

man is talking to two women in stylish dresses. A carriage passes them by with a lady holding a parasol.



Figure 16. *View of San Francisco [California]: Taken from the Western Hill at the Foot of Telegraph Hill, Looking toward Rincon Point and Mission Valley (circa 1851) lithograph by Henry Bainbridge (from the collection of Chinese in California, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley).*

In the turbulence of this time and place, the utility of material culture in establishing and maintaining identity took on new life. People needed things to eat and drink, as well as things upon which to eat and drink. The observance of eating and drinking by others provided opportunities for just such maintenance (see Chapters 3 and 7). Pastron (1990b:13), however, writes that “it is expected that artifact assemblages for the early part of the Gold Rush will be dominated by basic necessities, with few luxury items present.” At least for the miners, as depicted by contemporary images, this appears to be true. Figure 17 depicts the interior of a miners’ cabin, which is starkly furnished with only a few necessities. Five male miners are in the cabin, one of whom stokes a fire in the fireplace, another shows a gold nugget to two miners who are chatting to each other, and the fifth miner is asleep in a bed. Basic necessities like mining tools and household items litter the floor and shelves. Contrasting with this is the lack of any readily apparent luxury items.

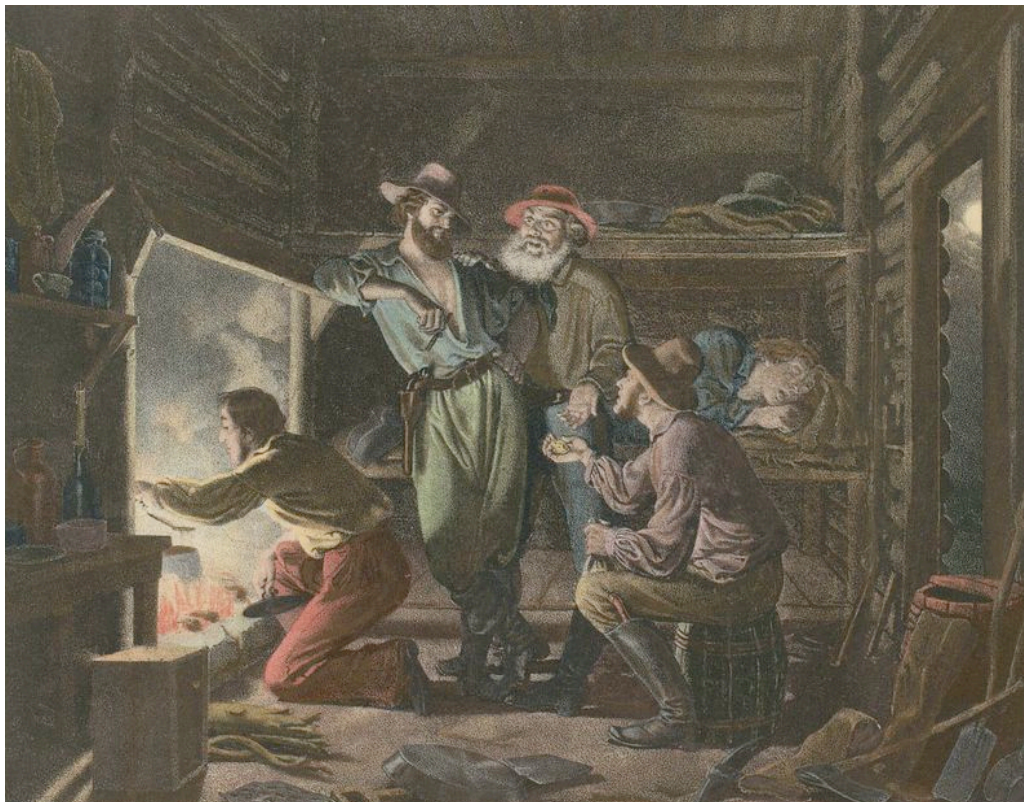


Figure 17. *Miner's Cabin, Result of the Day* (circa 1852) lithograph by A. Wenderoth (from the Robert B. Honeyman, Jr. Collection of Early Californian and Western American Pictorial Material, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley).

One of the best archaeological examples of where people could obtain supplies in San Francisco was represented in the Hoff's Store deposit, which was a ship chandlery owned by W.C. Hoff and Henry Owner (Pastron and Hattori 1990). Although Hoff's store is now located in the heart of San Francisco's Financial District, in 1851 it was located near the foot of Howison's Pier in the centre of the waterfront district and was adjacent to an "assortment of hastily erected, rough-hewn frame buildings, occupied by theatres, gambling halls, saloons, restaurants, brothels, and smoky waterfront dives" (see Figure 18) (Pastron 1990a:1-2). Excavated in 1986 and yielding approximately 29,000 artifacts, Hoff's store reflects a distinct event during Gold Rush San Francisco: the Great San Francisco Fire of May 3 – 4, 1851 (Pastron and Hattori 1990:vi; Walsh 1991:22).

In addition to the fire, which sealed part of historic San Francisco in an anaerobic environment, there were other factors contributing to the rich archaeological record at Hoff's store. Trash and material goods were deposited purposefully and

inadvertently in the bay, and subsequent land filling sealed it in an anaerobic environment and extended the shoreline bayward (Pastron 1990b:12). The price of goods fluctuated drastically, with goods being uncharacteristically valuable one day but not the next because of an influx of shipments, and many of these goods were thrown off the wharves (Pastron 1990b:10).



Figure 18. *Long Wharf, San Francisco, California* (circa 1850) wood engraving by an unknown artist. Hoff's store is the building on the far left with the American flag flying on its roof (from the Robert B. Honeyman, Jr. Collection of Early Californian and Western American Pictorial Material, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley).

Moreover, the haphazardly constructed wharves sometimes collapsed, bringing with it all that was on them, which included bulk cargo like lumber and coal (Pastron 1990b:10). Wharves were connected via cross cutting streets on pilings, and the enclosed areas were then filled with sand and gravel (Pastron 1990b:10). The Hoff's store deposit is significant because it is in the heart of where these deposition processes occurred and has a stratigraphic layer which represents a single deposition event in which material culture was found reflecting nearly every aspect of life in San Francisco, including ceramics, ship supplies (Delgado 1990), foodstuffs (Delgado 1990; Hattori and Kosta 1990), clothes (Terry and Pastron 1990:80; Huddleson and Watanabe 1990), stores (Delgado 1990; Hattori and Kosta 1990),

medicines (Pastron 1990a), firearms and ammunition (Delgado et al. 1990) and tools and hardware (Delgado 1990; Hattori and Bringham 1990; Pastron 1990a).

The development of the San Francisco waterfront is further discussed by James Delgado in *Gold Rush Entrepôt: The Maritime Archaeology of the Rise of the Port of San Francisco* (2006) and *Gold Rush Port: The Maritime Archaeology of San Francisco* (2009). Delgado explains how similar circumstances to the Hoff's store led to many storeships becoming buried underneath San Francisco's growing waterfront district during the nineteenth century. Although several of these storeships, including the storeships *Apollo* and *Arkansas*, were discovered over the next century, mostly during construction episodes, the only two ships that were archaeologically investigated in the past few decades and that yielded significant archaeological assemblages were the storeships *Niantic* and *General Harrison*. The *Niantic* assemblage contained utilitarian items such as pencils, pen nibs guns, French champagne, ale or porter, Madeira wine, sherry, English and American produced ceramics, and a catsup bottle (Delgado 2006:192). The *General Harrison* site yielded items such as barley and beans, leather footwear, a half wooden barrel, a round point shovel, glass beads, textiles, as well as crates of wine bottles (Delgado 2006:175-181, 199-200).

At the same time, however, such a strict paucity of luxury items was not necessarily a universal condition of the time and area. As Praetzellis and Praetzellis (2001) have discussed, gentility and its accompanying material culture constituted the "pre-eminent model of propriety" for the aspiring white middle class in nineteenth-century California, but other socio-economic groups, including Mexican-Californians, Chinese-American merchants, African-American porters and brothel owners used material culture, such as fashionable teawares and tablewares, glassware, and intricately decorated brass oil lamps, amongst other bric-a-brac, to also negotiate Victorian identities.

A city growing as rapidly, and drawing to it such a diverse population, as Gold Rush San Francisco could not but stimulate demands for a greater quantity and array of consumer goods. Furthermore, owing to its geographical location and frontier nature, California was almost entirely dependent on supplies from outside the region (Delgado 1990:25; Pastron 1990b:13). Delgado argues that, partly as a result of the Gold Rush, San Francisco became an clearinghouse in the world maritime system, routing goods throughout the west coast of the US and elsewhere (see Chapter 2) (Delgado 1990:28, 2006). It was in this city that miners arrived in California, as well

as procured supplies before trekking into the gold fields of the Sierra foothills (Delgado 1990:28). In this context, San Francisco required a substantial fleet of merchant ships such that the commodities they provided would have had a particularly significant impact in shaping the development of San Francisco and the identities of its inhabitants. A contemporary photograph (Figure 19) depicts the density of the growing city in the foreground, with the ships that enabled this growth at anchor in the background.



Figure 19. *San Francisco, East from Kearny and Clay Streets, with Masts of Sailing Ships in the Harbor* (circa 1851) daguerreotype photograph by unknown photographer (from the collection of Cased Photographs and Related Images from the Bancroft Library Pictorial Collections, University of California, Berkeley).

Trade Between San Francisco and China

The Hoff's store deposit also reflects the varied nature of goods that arrived in San Francisco from around the world, and especially from China. American merchants situated in Canton were well positioned to provide material goods needed for the population influx into San Francisco, which would otherwise have been made to obtain its goods from the east coast of America routed around Cape Horn (Mudge 1986:190-191). For example, according to Mudge, the ship *Rhone* arrived from

China in California in 1849 with a cargo that included Chinese export porcelain teawares, dinnerwares and toiletry sets (Mudge 1986:190-191). Other ships that made the run included *Emmy*, *Honolulu* and *Correo de Cobija* (Layton 1997:126). The presence of Chinese produced goods in San Francisco is further indicated in Figure 20, which depicts a humorous view of people trying to cross water in the streets of San Francisco in front of a line of stores. Included in this line of stores is a Chinese warehouse, as well as a sign painting business and other enterprises.



Figure 20. *The Winter of 1849* (1855) lithograph by Francis Samuel Marryat (from the Robert B. Honeyman, Jr. Collection of Early Californian and Western American Pictorial Material, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley).

Recently, historical archaeology has addressed the unique material residue left behind by Chinese people who migrated through San Francisco to the rural mining fields (Wegars 1993; Voss and Williams 2008). Barbara Voss and Rebecca Allen (2008:6) believe that the vast majority of Chinese people who immigrated to the United States during the nineteenth century migrated from the surrounding Canton area, where centuries of cultural and economic relations with non-Chinese people had occurred. David Sisson (1993:36) gathers, “Generally most overseas Chinese sites in a rural western United States setting have unique artifact assemblages that are typically easy to identify.” These assemblages usually contain large amounts of Chinese porcelain or porcelaneous stoneware (Staski 1993:138; Williams 2008:59). Though Chinese porcelain decorative types like Four Flowers, celadon and Double Happiness are common on Chinese archaeological sites, probably the most common

is Bamboo (see Chapter 7) (Williams 2008:57). As Voss and Allen (2008:19) point out, “In practice, a Bamboo-pattern porcelain rice bowl was as commonplace and utilitarian an object in 19-th century Overseas Chinese communities as a transfer-print ironstone plate was in contemporary European American households.” Other artifacts commonly associated with Chinese sites in America include gaming pieces, dice, domino-like tiles, medicine bottles (Fosha and Leatherman 2008), opium smoking paraphernalia (Wylil 1993; Sando 1993) and hair combs (Voss 2008; Wegars 1993). What is surprising about nearly all of this research is that only one study (Williams 2008) mentions how this Chinese material culture was transported as cargo aboard ships like *Frolic* from China to the burgeoning consumer markets in San Francisco, where it was subsequently sold to consumers through merchant houses.

The material culture at Hoff’s store also shows associations with the American trade in China, as evidenced through Chinese export porcelain, represented by five Chinese blue-and-white porcelain toiletry sets – basins, water bottles, brush boxes, soap dishes and chamber pots (Terry and Pastron 1990:75-81). Terry and Pastron (1990:75) state that these toiletry sets, “fall into a grey [sic] zone which is neither fine porcelain found in private collections and art museums nor the common domestic ware associated with the storage and consumption of food, and commonly found at the Chinese occupation sites in the western United States.” The Chinese porcelain found at Hoff’s store was of higher quality than utilitarian ware, but not of such a high quality that it was desired as collectable (Terry and Pastron 1990:75). Despite the ceramic’s mid-level value, Terry and Pastron (1990:81) argue, “Chinese export ceramics were in high demand in San Francisco at the height of the Gold Rush” and ceramics such as these “were eagerly sought for use in both hotels and private homes.” The presence of Chinese export porcelain in San Francisco is interesting because, although sales of Chinese ceramics were declining on the east coast of America, Gold Rush San Francisco represented a burgeoning market for Chinese ceramics, as well as other Chinese commodities (Mudge 1986:189-191; Terry and Pastron 1990:75;).

Augustine Heard & Company and the Shipwreck

Frolic

According to Mudge, there were several businesses involved in the trade from China to Gold Rush California, including Russel & Co., Jardine, Matheson & Co. and Augustine Heard & Co. (Mudge 1986:190-191). Augustine Heard & Co. was a Boston-based trading house established in 1840 by Augustine Heard and Joseph Coolidge (Layton 1997:29). George Basil Dixwell, another prominent Boston merchant, joined the firm in 1841 (Layton 1997:30-31). Before these merchants founded Augustine Heard & Co., Heard had worked in one of the largest American trading houses at Canton, that of Russel & Co., since 1830, while Coolidge worked there for six years (Layton 1997:29). Consequently, they both had extensive experience in the US – China trade. It was Dixwell, however, who “was to become the principal architect of the Heard firm’s immensely profitable commerce in opium” (Layton 1997:31).

In April 1844, Dixwell commissioned William Gardner of Baltimore to design and build *Frolic*, and the Gardner Brothers Shipyard completed and launched the ship later that year (Layton 1997:52-53). Both Layton (1997, 2002) and Smith (2006) have provided a detailed analysis of *Frolic*’s construction, and, as such, this study will not repeat that story. It should be pointed out, however, that, as a Baltimore clipper, *Frolic*’s V-shaped bottom, four-to-one length-to-beam ratio, and raking stem and stern was designed to go fast, with its heavy brig rigging well suited for coastal trading and the lighter breezes found along the opium trade route between India and China (Layton 1997:53-57, 181-186; Smith 2006:5-21).

Augustine Heard & Co. appointed Edward Horatio Faucon as captain of *Frolic*, and in keeping with the tradition of the day, Faucon invested in a part ownership share of the ship (Layton 1997:65-66). Smith reasons, “This practice of shares and partnerships in 19th century oceanic trade often produced aggressive sea captains, whose personal stake in the success of each and every venture added a unique dynamic to trade. These captains sometimes took risks that others did not” (Smith 2006:5). Captain Faucon’s brash and pompous character was commented upon in Richard Henry Dana’s (1840) autobiography, *Two Years Before the Mast*, in which Dana chronicles his experiences as a seaman aboard the ship *Pilgrim* under the

direction of Captain Faucon as part of the 1830s fur trade along the Pacific coast of North America.

By the late 1840s, Augustine Heard & Co. recognised that steamers and larger sailing ships were going to make smaller sailing ships like *Frolic* obsolete (Layton 1997:111-113, 123). The Heards had contemplated selling *Frolic* a few times but after the discovery of gold in 1848, he decided to send *Frolic* to California with a cargo of Chinese goods in order to attempt to capitalise on the burgeoning trade there (Layton 1997:116-117, 132). Depending on how much profit was gained on the trading venture, the vessel would be sold in California, or the Heards would keep the vessel engaged in the trade between Canton and California (Layton 1997:134). Captain Faucon had extensive knowledge of the Californian coast from his involvement in the fur trade during the 1830s, and it was believed that he could oversee *Frolic*'s safe arrival (Smith 2006:7).

By May 1850, Augustine Heard & Co. had arranged a 135-ton cargo for *Frolic*'s trading voyage to California (Layton 1997:134). The original bills of lading generally listed sixteen categories of goods, as denoted in Table 6.

Table 6. *Frolic*'s bill of lading (Layton 1997:134-135).

Frolic's Bill of Lading
243 cases Silks
18 cases Grass cloth
101 packages comprising 1 House
4 cases Paintings
30 cases Lacquered ware
9 cases Scales & Weights
676 rolls Chinaware
20 cases Chinaware
3 cases Silverware
30 cases Camphor Trunks
54 cases Furniture
100 boxes Sweetmeats
174 packages Sundries
84 cases Beer
23 cases Merchandise
33 packages Merchandise

As part of outfitting the ship, insurance was procured from the Western India Insurance Society and the Imperial Marine Insurance Company, as were sufficient provisions for a roundtrip voyage (Layton 1997:136-137). These provisions included rice, potatoes, bread, sugar, honey, vinegar, pork, dried fish, flour, eggs, capons, fowls, geese, pigeons and pigs. Faucon also purchased “a barrel of wine, twelve dozen bottles of porter, eight dozen bottles of beer, four boxes of cider, several dozen bottles of brandy, and an unspecified number of bottles of gin” (Layton 1997:137). Other supplies included firewood, wicks and oil for oil lamps, iron ballast and various marine charts (Layton 1997:137). By this time, Faucon had sold his share of *Frolic* back to the Heards before its final voyage; he must have decided his share of profits from the cargo alone would suffice (Layton 1997:128; Smith 2006:5).

Frolic left China on 10 June 1850, and the trip that followed remained uneventful until 26 July. At 9:30 in the evening, Captain Edward Horatio Faucon was below decks when the Chief Officer came below and reported to Faucon that he saw “something to windward wh[ich] looks like breakers” (Letter from E. Faucon to Augustine Heard & Co., 5 August 1850, cited in Smith 2006). Captain Faucon replied, “It’s impossible... There can be no breakers in that direction at all events” (Letter from E. Faucon to Augustine Heard & Co., 5 August 1850, cited in Smith 2006). Captain Faucon had estimated his distance from the coast as at least 50 – 60 miles from the point where he planned to turn south along the coast towards San Francisco, but as soon as he reached the deck he saw the breakers, but no land. He ordered the stern to port and instructed the crew to take soundings, but it was too late (Letter from E. Faucon to Augustine Heard & Co., 5 August 1850, cited in Smith 2006) “The rudder went immediately & the water was soon up to within a few inches of the cabin floor” (Letter from E. Faucon to Augustine Heard & Co., 5 August 1850, cited in Smith 2006). As Faucon later wrote, the bow swung around counter clockwise to face the swell and “alongside of the rocks over wh[ich] the sea broke furiously. I then for the first time saw land apparently at a very short distance & between the reef & the shore 2 or three islets or large rocks” (Letter from E. Faucon to Augustine Heard & Co., 5 August 1850, cited in Smith 2006).

All but six men immediately evacuated the ship on two of the ship’s small boats. The crew had no time to grab clothing or stores, but Faucon was able to grab two bottles of brandy, four bottles of porter and about a dozen crackers. They followed the rocky coast approximately six miles south, eventually landing on a beach where Faucon had spotted fires the previous night. Because one of the boats was badly leaking, Faucon, his officers and five others continued southward in the more seaworthy boat,

leaving the rest of the crew on the beach. After ten days travelling down the coast, Faucon and his crew arrived at San Francisco. Here he composed his letter to the Heard Company in China detailing the wrecking circumstances. That same day, upon hearing the news of the shipwreck in San Francisco, the *Daily Alta California* (5 August 1850) reported:

SHIPWRECK AND LOSS OF LIFE.—The brig *Frolic*, of Boston, E. H. Faucon, master, from China, the 16th of June, was totally lost on a reef, about sixty miles above Fort Ross, on the night of the 26th ult. Six of the crew were lost in the vessel. The remainder landed about 5 or 6 miles from the reef, saving nothing but what they stood in. The captain and officers with three men reached Ross in one of the boats, on the 31st. The rest of the crew are travelling down by land, as on the boats proved to be very leaky, and the men preferred the land route. The reef on which the *Frolic* struck appeared to extend WNW and ESE, some two miles in extent, and the eastern end of it a mile or two from the shore, which had the appearance of a high point with rocky islets fronting it. Below the point the land landed to the eastward. The *Frolic* struck the reef stern on, in eight fathoms water, and filled immediately. At the time the reef was first seen, the *Frolic* was steering ESE and the reef bore N. The wind very light N to NNE. The *Frolic* was immediately hauled to SWW; but although she had steerage way, with the wind on her quarter, which was very light, and the swell setting to the SE, she was swept up by a strong tide or current. Capt. F. reached this place yesterday. The *Frolic* was judged to be 50 or 60 miles from the nearest land at the time the reef was discovered. The *Frolic* was bound to this port with a valuable cargo of Chinese goods. The loss is estimated to be about \$150,000.

Four days later, Faucon and his two officers gave their public deposition. *Frolic* was declared a total loss and the insurance companies paid what the vessel and cargo were probably worth, finding no fault with Captain Faucon or the seaworthiness of the vessel.

Salvaging Activities and Previous Archaeological Work on *Frolic*

Despite *Frolic* being declared a total loss, salvaging activities on the shipwreck began almost immediately. Rumours trickled down the coast that *Frolic* was still hanging on the rocks, and Captain Faucon mounted a salvage operation. Faucon

never reported finding the wreck but Layton speculates that, even if he did, there was probably not much left (Layton 1997:143-145). A salvage operation was also mounted from a local lumber mill at the nearby town of Bodega. Although nothing of value was found, there were reports of Indian women wearing silk shawls in the area, and a government interpreter reported seeing rather out of place Chinese goods in a small thatched house owned by George Parker Armstrong on the Russian River (Layton 1997:145).

After this, the *Frolic* shipwreck was forgotten until the 1950s, when sport divers rediscovered it. The sport divers not only collected things from the surface, they also used dynamite to penetrate into the wreck. These activities on the site have been well documented by Layton (2002:126-148), who established a rapport with many of the sport divers through interviews. Although there are recordings of these interviews, they are not available for research, and, as such, outside the limits of this study. A brief recapitulation of them, however, has been presented by Layton (1997, 2002).

In 1984, Thomas Layton and a number of San Jose State University students were excavating a Pomo Indian archaeological site called Three Chop Village (CA-MEN-790), where they found two slivers of green glass and a small fragment of porcelain that had been salvaged from the shipwreck *Frolic* (Layton 1997, 2002). At first Layton suspected that the Pomo village would pre-date European contact and that the porcelain and glass were a recent deposit, but as the excavations ensued, more glass and ceramics were found, some even with evidence of flaking and grinding (Layton 1997:11). By the end of the excavation, Layton and his students had recovered 50 fragments of porcelain, one of which had been ground into a pre-formed bead, as well as 150 fragments of green glass, three of which were unfinished arrow tips (Layton 1997:12).

A Jackson State Forester, Dana Cole, informed Layton that he had seen similar artifacts ten miles away on “pottery beach” near Casper (Layton 1997:11-12). Upon Layton’s request, Cole took him to the beach and Layton subsequently began researching the shipwreck. Through a contact at the Kelley House Museum, he learned that sport divers had been salvaging the wreck and that an anonymous donor had given the museum a shoe and several fragments of Chinese porcelain. Layton made contact with the donor, David Buller, who showed him the rest of his collection (Layton 1997:13). At this time, Layton also began extensively researching the identity of this ship in historical records, pin-pointing *Frolic*’s name through the newspaper article published in the *Daily Alta California* (5 August 1850) shortly

after its wrecking. He also discovered Jerome B. Ford's diary, in which he described the Pomo Indian women wearing silk shawls salvaged from the wreck, and an oral history transcript from the Kelley House Museum that detailed Mrs. Kelley, whose house now serves as the museum, trading with the Pomo Indians for three bolts of silk taken from the wreck to make clothing (Layton 1997:14). Although Layton published these findings as a chapter in *Western Pomo History* (1991), he did not stop researching at this point. Layton located the Augustine Heard & Co. papers in the Baker Library at the Harvard University Graduate School of Business Administration, as well as many other associated documents (see Layton 1997 and 2002). He also established a relationship with the sport divers, who, because of his encouragement, have since donated a large portion of their collections to the Kelley House Museum and the Mendocino County Museum. He has also published two books, *The Voyage of the Frolic: New England Merchants and the Opium Trade* (1997) and *Gifts from the Celestial Kingdom: A Shipwreck Cargo for Gold Rush California* (2002) showcasing his extensive research, and there are apparently a few more publications to come (see Smith 2006). Layton also supervised one of his Masters students, Patricia Hagen Jones (1992), who conducted a study on the blue-and-white porcelain in the artifact collection, defining several different decorative styles. Jones's analysis will be discussed in more detail as part of Chapter 7.

In addition to Layton's pioneering historical research, as part of two underwater archaeology field schools, Sheli Smith of the PAST Foundation directed the investigations of the *Frolic* shipwreck site during 2003 and 2004 (see Chapter 4). This archaeological work is well documented in a survey report by Smith (2006). The 2003 investigations focused on mapping and defining the extant site remains and its formation processes, (Smith 2006:28). Because of heavy surge, the survey crew worked in teams of three and recorded measurements using triangulation from a baseline, ultimately creating a two-dimensional plan with the extant iron ballast defining the site perimeter (Smith 2006:29). During 2004 students undertook a diagnostic artifact collection along ten, 10 foot (3 metres) wide transects that ran perpendicular to the baseline (Smith 2006:31-32). According to Smith (2006:31), "This diagnostic collection created a baseline from which artifacts recovered previously without scientific provenience and artifacts in the future can be compared and researched." During 2003 and 2004, students also undertook photo documentation of the existing artifacts housed in the Mendocino County Museum, the Kelley House Museum and the Point Cabrillo Light Station Museum that were recovered prior to 2004 (see Chapter 4), and created a *FileMaker Pro* database encompassing all of the *Frolic* artifacts that were removed and subsequently donated

to the museum by sport divers, as well as the 123 artifacts recovered during the 2004 field season (Smith 2006:31). Today, the entire collection represents the repatriation of 28 different small assemblages, many of which belonged to sport divers who, convinced by Thomas Layton, donated their collections to the public domain, as well as the artifacts recovered by the PAST Foundation during 2004 (Smith 2006:50).

Conclusion

With the discovery of gold and the subsequent growth of San Francisco as a centre of commerce and culture on the west coast of North America, an enormous array and number of people and goods were shipped to and from the city's harbour and wharfs. The social and economic turmoil of the time and place meant that material culture's role in establishing, maintaining and negotiating social identity was particularly essential to the people of San Francisco. The breadth and sophistication of San Franciscan society and its maritime trade are today well represented by the archaeological remains of the San Francisco waterfront, such as that found in Hoff's store (Delgado 2006; Pastron and Hattori 1990). Also reflected in the Hoff's store deposit, American traders in Canton, including Augustine Heard & Co., seized upon the economic opportunities engendered by the growth of San Francisco and the need for suitable material goods. As such, *Frolic* set sail with a 135-ton cargo of Chinese export goods intended for the San Franciscan consumer market, a cargo that would instead be wrecked a mere sixty miles north of the city. Through the diligence of Layton (1997, 2002), Jones (1992) and Smith (2006), the remains of the shipwreck have been archaeologically investigated, allowing this and future studies to benefit from its use in understanding the past.