

# Chinese wisdom reaped gold and veggies

Chinaman's Point c. 1860's - 1900's

**Chinese miners outnumbered the European settlers but did not enjoy their comforts. Instead, they lived in shanty communities of their own.**

**The largest such settlement was known as Chinaman's Point. It comprised of a cluster of bark and timber huts situated on a steep slope overlooking the Jordan River at Jericho.**

Although much knowledge has been lost, it is believed that many traditional practises flourished. This is indicated by the construction of a Joss House, or Chinese Folk Temple and ceremonial ovens used for special celebrations.

The Chinese miner had an ability to mine gold and return a profit where others had failed, from overlooked or overworked grounds. This, along with their ability to thrive from their neat home vegetable gardens, was often resented by the European community.

Ironically, it was the Chinese, and their provision of fresh vegetables which they sold at market, which kept many Europeans from developing scurvy. The European diet generally consisted of flour and tea and occasionally a little bit of meat. The fresh produce added much needed essential vitamins.



Photo: Ah Wy a gardener in the area at the time. From Rodgers, J.G., 1998, 'Jericho on the Jordan: a Gippsland Goldfields History'



Photo: The last Chinaman on the Jordan Goldfields'. From Tomlin, O.F., Bosa, M., Chamberlain, P.G., 1979, 'Gold for the Finding: A pictorial History of Gippsland's Jordan Goldfield'

**Many stories surround Chinaman's Point. One such story tells of an ill-fated Chinese miner who developed gangrene in his broken leg which needed amputation. On recovery, the man decided to take his gold and return to China.**

**Traditional belief held that a person needed to be buried with all their body parts to achieve an eternal resting peace. Seeking to reacquire his leg from the doctor, it is suggested he was issued with the most likely looking of bones from a dusty heap. The bones were presented solemnly with a formal receipt exchanged despite the reality that the amputated leg was either disposed of or destroyed.**