



Chinese miner died after shooting on the gold fields

Shaded by large trees in the Andersons Bay Cemetery, Dunedin, is the almost forgotten grave of Joe [Leong Shum](#).

ACHINESE gold miner and respected benefactor to the Naseby Hospital, Joe [Leong Shum](#) was called “Chum” by Europeans who, because of his generosity, thought he was wealthy.

He arrived in 1896 at the age of 18 to help his father work the Upper Kyeburn gold claim. Both father and son alternated on trips to China until the former was too old to come back. [Shum](#), a tall and powerfully built man, continued with sluicing assisted by a diminutive elderly ex-market gardener, Sue Pee, whom the Europeans thought was his uncle.

On July 17, 1928, vagabond William John Hardie, posing as a policeman, sought out [Shum](#), showing great interest in the gun he had.

Hardie said he was looking for a fugitive. After sharing a meal with the two men, Hardie insisted on seeing the gold claim. [Shum](#) took him to the claim, handed the gun to Hardie and showed him about two ounces of gold from eight weeks of work.

There was a struggle and [Shum](#) was shot several times in the abdomen. He staggered some distance back to the hut where Sue Pee saw him, hauled him inside and placed him on his bed. [Shum](#) told Sue Pee he had grabbed and broken the gun after he was shot. Sue Pee then made a long journey to the Naseby Hotel to get aid but [Shum](#) died shortly after he left.

Hardie fled the district but was found by police and taken to trial in Dunedin. The gold he had in his possession was proven to be from the Kyeburn area. Hardie was found guilty and sentenced to life imprisonment.

[Shum's](#) body was brought to Dunedin for the inquest. His brother, Joe Choy, buried him with a gold coin over each eye in block 33, plot 40, in the Andersons Bay Cemetery. This grave has been overgrown for almost 40 years.

It is marked with a concrete surround and a tall, imposing marble headstone that has been recently restored. [Shum](#) was the last Chinese gold miner in Naseby and was murdered at the age of 51. He has no known descendants in New Zealand.

Contributed by Les Wong, of Dunedin, in conjunction with the Historic Cemeteries Conservation Trust of New Zealand.