

The Ahwahneechees: A Story of the Yosemite Indians (1966) by John W. Bingaman

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About the Author



*John Bingaman (From
Sargent's Protecting Paradise).*

John W. Bingaman was born June 18, 1896 in Ohio. He worked for the railroad in New York and California, then made tanks and combines during World War I. He first worked in Yosemite starting in 1918 as a packer and guide. John was appointed park ranger in 1921 and worked in several parts of Yosemite National Park. His wife Martha assisted her husband during the busy summer season. John retired in 1956. After retiring he lived in the desert in Southern California and spent summers touring various mountain areas and National Parks with their trailer. In retirement he wrote this book, *Ahwahneechees, Guardians of the Yosemite: A Story of the First Rangers* (1961), and *Pathways: A Story of Trails and Men* (1968). His autobiography is on pages 98-99 of *Guardians of the Yosemite*. John's second wife was Irene. John Bingaman died April 5, 1987 in Stockton, California.

Bibliographical Information



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—Dan Anderson, www.yosemite.ca.us

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Francisco

THE AHWAHNEECHEES

A STORY OF THE YOSEMITE INDIANS

by
JOHN W. BINGAMAN
District Park Ranger (Retired)



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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

THANKS TO ALL THOSE WHOM HAVE CONTRIBUTED SO MUCH TO THE EARLY HISTORY OF THESE PEOPLE AND TO THIS BOOK, I AM DEEPLY GRATEFUL.

THE AUTHOR WISHES TO ACKNOWLEDGE HIS INDEBTEDNESS TO THE AUTHORITIES WHOSE BOOKS ARE LISTED IN THE BIBLIOGRAPHY AND TO THE PEOPLE WHO PATIENTLY ANSWERED ALL HIS QUESTIONS. THE STAFF OF THE YOSEMITE MUSEUM GAVE MATERIAL ASSISTANCE. SUGGESTIONS AND HELP WERE GRACIOUSLY GIVEN BY MR. CARL P. RUSSELL, MRS. PHYLLIS BROYLES, PHOEBE WILSON LOVINE HOGAN, AND WILLIAM AND MARY HOOD.

FOREWORD



Piute Papoose, Yosemite Valley

Little more than a century has passed since invading white miners first incurred the wrath of Yosemite Indians. The Mariposa Indian War of the early 1850's brought a good deal of notice to certain Indian chiefs and subchiefs among the hostiles; lurid tales regarding these Indians spread through the hills. A limited literature also grew up around some of the storied people and places — a literature which, generally, was colored by the hateful bias maintained by many of the land-hungry whites. Moderately decent proposals made by U. S. Indian agents for the settlement of Indian pleas brought many criticisms by California politicians, abusive charges were hurled against the mediators, and on occasion, white champions of the Indians' plea were murdered in cold blood. Under conditions of tension, ethnological considerations "went by the board", and very few, indeed, were the tribesmen who became distinct individuals in the printed record of the day. In other words, not many of the Yosemite Indians of a hundred years ago can at this late date be identified as remembered personalities.

During the several decades following the wars, the Indians of the Mariposa-Tuolumne-Mono country fared variously at the hands of the white inhabitants. In the mining camps the white lords sometimes downgraded Indian life to something less than human; for a time, even the courts in formal session classed the Indian as animal. In Yosemite Valley, a goodly number of hotel keepers, owners of saddle horses and stage line operators, merchants, photographers, guides, and drivers, as well as the women folk in the families of these local residents, welcomed the help and paid for the services of Indians. Some friendly inter-relationships developed in this connection. However, even the most affectionate and intimate association of this kind usually found no place in the printed record. Probably the Boysens of Yosemite Valley accomplished as much as did any family in handing down concrete evidences of the personalities of Sierra natives as they existed at the turn of the century. The Boysen Indian portraits are outstanding among source materials.

Now John Bingaman has given sympathetic attention to still later generations of "Yosemite" Indians. The brief biographies here contained make for some identification of Indians, young and old, who today frequent the haunts of the one-time Ahwahneechee. Bingaman's biographical data, obtained with the help of Pheobe Rogan and her Indian collaborators, principally, facilitate the placement of each present-day Yosemite Indian upon the historic geneological tree representative of the several groups who formerly peopled the Yosemite region. The "original Yosemitees," of course, did not originate in Yosemite; it is pertinent to note that the great chief, Tenaya, did himself point proudly to his Mono forebears. The family tree, then, is not a Yosemite tree; in fact, it is not limited in its spread to the great Miwok family. Some of the several small local bands who neighbored upon the Yosemitees, belonged to those other major

families, the Monos and the Yokuts. Numerous individuals from these other families "joined up" with the Yosemite band. Also there is evidence that runaway Mission Indians came to the Merced before the whiteman saw Yosemite. Traditionally, the Yosemite Indians always were a conglomeration of peoples, and Bingaman's notes indicate that the Indians now in the "Incomparable Valley" represent a mixture of strains more divergent than ever.

Perhaps the pioneering in Indian biography here demonstrated (Chapter 4) may stir an urge in an educated Indian mind which somewhere will lead to further compilation and a synthesis from the Indian point of view. The fragmentary and rather black record of the whiteman's heartlessness, and of his old-time techniques in meeting the Indian problem in the central Sierra may well change under the stimulating warmth of federal payments of Indian land claims now in the making. The new order of things may place upon the docket of public conscience a listing of human rights pertaining particularly to Indian needs. Such progress as has been made in recognizing those rights must get an accounting.

Our thanks go to John Bingaman for initiative shown in shaping this little work, and for his determination in producing and distributing it in the face of big difficulties.

CARL P. RUSSELL

Orinda, California

July 1, 1966

PREFACE



Ta-bu-ce

The following biographical sketches of Yosemite Indians may serve as an authentic source of material that otherwise would be lost to future generations, the files, and records.

This historical information was obtained from various journals, notes, my personal diary, Yosemite Nature Notes, pamphlets, references from L. H. Bunnell, "Discovery of the Yosemite," Ralph S. Kuykendall, "Early History of Yosemite," A. L. Kroeber, "Indians of Yosemite," Elizabeth H. Godfrey, "Yosemite Nature Notes," Clark Wissler, "Indians of the U. S." Also, I am indebted to the Yosemite Museum Staff for their cooperation.

With the kind help of Phoebe Hogan, a long time resident of Yosemite Indian Village, I have assembled these short biographies, the history, family, relationship, and residence, of these past and present Yosemite Indians.

Before white men came the population estimated for the Miwok (interior) seems to be a liberal number of nine thousand. The consequence was that in the sixty years between the first serious contact with the white man until the census of 1910, the Miwok lost more than ninety percent of their numbers. The census of 1910 of the Miwok stock, as enumerated by the Department of Commerce, was 699, only one half of them full-blooded.

Population of Indians in Yosemite at the time of discovery is not accurately known, but may be estimated to have been in the vicinity of two hundred and fifty. By A. L. Kroeber, and L. H. Bunnell, estimated about two hundred. James Hutchings mentions in his book, "In the Heart of the Sierras," up to five hundred that gathered in the valley for the acorn harvest, and other food and game.

With reference to friendship, and religion, the Indians of this region, in common with many others, were of a highly religious temperament, most devout in their beliefs and observances, and easily influenced by the medicine men of their tribes. Elaborate ceremonies were carried out, in which all of the details were highly symbolical, and some of their curious and picturesque superstitions were responsible for acts of cruelty and vengeance, which in many cases were foreign to their natural disposition.

Some of the old Indians in Yosemite were converted by a Franciscan Priest, Father Williams, who used to talk with them. They used to tell about this Priest. He must have come shortly after the discovery of Yosemite. Old Indian Mary and Chief Teneiya were converted by this Franciscan Priest.

In the past decade most of the old full-bloods have passed on to the "Happy Hunting Ground." Many of the young generation marry into other tribes and making their living beside the average white. Prior to 1931, the old original Indian Village in Yosemite was in a deplorable condition. After the Park Service took over the administration of the Yosemite National Park, the problem of housing and protection of the Yosemite Indians was a controversial subject, as to what best to do. In 1931, the Park Service built about ten or twelve three-room houses, below the Yosemite Lodge. These were not of high standard, but so much better than the old bark shanty and lean-to, in which they existed for many years. Some were happy with these living improvements at that time, some were not. But in this present era, the buildings are little more than shelter from the storms and cold.

[Editor's note: the original residents of the Indian Village were born in Yosemite. When residents remarried or died they or their children were not allowed to stay in their homes and had to move away. In 1969 the Park Service moved the one remaining family out of the Indian Village and burned it. See Linda W. Greene Yosemite: The Park and Its Resources v. 1 & 2 (NPS, 1987).]

From a Washington news item, dated July 28, 1963, I quote, "The Justice Department has agreed to a \$29.1 million payment on California Indian land claims dating back more than 100 years."

Actual settlement for the land taken during the gold rush days of the 1850's now hinges upon acceptance of the agreement by the U.S. Indian Claims Commission, the Indian groups concerned, and the Secretary of-the Interior as guardian or trustee for the Indians. The appropriation of the money would be up to Congress.

A determination that the government was liable for the taking of the land was reached some time ago by the Claims Commission, with the amount to be paid left open. If ultimately accepted, the proposed settlement with three groups, the Indians of California, Pitt River and Mission Indians, would be one of the largest judgments in the history of the Claims Commission. In 1959, the Claims Commission determined that the Indians of California had established original ownership to substantially all of the area of California west of the Sierra Nevadas, except the Pitt River area in the vicinity of Mt. Lassen in the north central California, and the area claimed by the Mission Indians in southern California.

In 1850 Congress authorized treaties with the Indians to obtain the cession of their land. Eighteen treaties were negotiated. They were not ratified, however, and the Indians did not receive the reservations promised them in the treaties.

The proposed payment to the California Indians would be for more than 64 million acres. The \$29. 1 million is the net amount after satisfaction of government claim for credit for about \$3 million of gratuitous payments and benefits given the Indians by the Federal Government. The \$29. 1 million offer by the Justice Department depends on so many contingencies that it is impossible to predict a settlement of California Indian claims, Los Angeles attorney John W. Preston, Jr., commented. Preston is one of several lawyers associated in representing the Federated Indians of California, groups primarily in the northern part of the state, and representing about 2, 000 or 10 percent of the Indians involved.

"I imagine that what will happen will be a series of meetings with various Indian bands and groups throughout California," he said.

The California Indians were pursued and persecuted without mercy, and were dispossessed and humiliated without recourse, and while it was no part of their creed to love their enemies, and to pray for those who despicably used and abused them, they were too weak and disunited to wreak their alleged barbaric vengeance effectively upon their oppressors.

Further to relate the annals of the woes of the California Indians, to venture upon the details of the dark story of their wrongs and wretchedness, would be simply to repeat Helen Hunt Jackson's history of "A Century of Dishonor," of how a weak and defenseless people were invaded, despoiled, corrupted, dispossessed, driven from their homes, and the graves of their fathers, hunted like wild beasts of the forest, and hurled down with violence and slaughter to an early grave "unknelled, uncoffined and unknown." From such a revolting scene we turn in horror and indignation, and blush with shame at the "inhumanity of man to man." And so we, of the present generation, in our desire to do penance for the sins of our pioneer progenitors, sometimes feel moved meekly to bow our heads and with humble and contrite hearts passionately give utterance to the sentiment expressed in the lines of the old revival hymn—

"To the blest fountain of Thy Blood,
Incarnate God, we fly;
Here let us wash our spotted souls
From crimes of deepest dye."

CHAPTER I

THE AHWAHNEECHEES



Mary Lebrado — The Last Survivor

The beginnings of human life in the Yosemite Valley are shrouded in impenetrable mystery. As we seek to trace back the history of the people who were occupying the region when white men entered its fastness, we come almost immediately into the realm of myth and legend, from which it is impossible to extract any element of attested fact. But from the Indian legends, filtered through the imagination of the white folk, we can draw out a fairly consistent story which, in the absence of authentic history, may serve as an introduction.

From time immemorial there had dwelt in the fair Valley of Ahwahnee the powerful tribe of the Ahwahneechees. To this place they believed the Great Spirit had led them from their original home in the far distant west. In their new, high walled home the Ahwahneechees were secure from attack, and their warlike prowess made them feared and respected by all the other tribes of the mountains. But at length an evil time came upon them, wars and a fearful pestilence decimated the tribe. The Valley was held to be accursed, and the feeble remnants of its inhabitants fled to their neighbors or to the wild tribes across the mountains. For many years the Valley was deserted.

But a certain noble youth of the tribe, who had gone among the Monos, married a maiden of that tribe, and to this pair a son was born, who was named Teneiya. Now Teneiya, when he had grown to man's estate, remembered what he had heard about the home of his fathers. So he gathered together the remnants of the tribe, and returned with them to the valley of Ahwahnee; and they prospered, and once more became powerful.

One day it happened that a young brave, going to the Lake of the Sleeping Water to spear fish, was met by a monster grizzly bear, and a terrific battle ensued, from which the Indian emerged victorious, though grievously wounded.

After this the young chief was called Yosemite, or the large grizzly bear, and finally the name came to be applied to the whole tribe. [Editor's note: For the correct origin of the word *Yosemite* see "Origin of the Word Yosemite."—DEA]

Thus far the legend. But with Teneiya we come to a historical personage, the last chief of the Yosemitees. He was ruling over the tribe when the white men came to the Valley.

When asked about the name Yosemite he is reported to have said that when he was a young chief this name had been selected for the tribe, because they occupied the mountains and valleys which were the favorite resort of the grizzly bear, and because those neighboring Indians who had bestowed it were afraid of the grizzlies, and feared his band.

Ethnologically the natives of the Yosemite Valley belonged to the Mariposa dialect group of the southern Sierra Miwok Indians, and the ethnologists assure us that the Indian name for the valley was, and still is Awani (Ahwahnee), which was the name of the principal village in the valley, and by extension, the name of the people also. The ending, *tei* or *chee*, signifying location or origin, is sometimes added to Awani or Ahwahnee, when speaking of the people. The name Yosemite is simply a corruption of the term which the southern Miwoks applied to any species of bear, and particularly to the grizzly, and was given to the valley, as we shall see, because the white people who first came in contact with its native inhabitants called them Yosemite.

Teneiya was recognized by the Mono tribe as one of their numbers, as he was born and lived among them until his ambition made him a leader, and founder of the Pai-ute colony in Ahwahnee. His history and warlike exploits formed a part of the traditionary lore of the Monos. They were proud of his success, and boasted of his descent from their tribe, although Teneiya himself claimed that his father was a Chief of the independent Yosemite people, whose ancestors were of a different tribe. Teneiya had, by his cunning and sagacity in managing the deserters from other tribes who had sought his protection, maintained a reputation as a chief whose leadership was never disputed by his followers, and who was the envy of the leaders of other tribes. After his subjugation by the whites, he was deserted by his followers, and his supremacy was no longer acknowledged by the neighboring tribes, who had feared rather than respected him, or the people of his band.

Many years ago the old chief said, "The Ahwahneechees had been a large and powerful tribe, but by means of wars, and fatal black sickness, nearly all had been destroyed, and the survivors of the band fled from the valley, and joined other tribes."

For years afterwards this locality was uninhabited, but finally Teneiya, who as mentioned, claimed to be descended from an Ahwahneechee chief, left the Monos where he had been born and brought up, and gathering some of his father's old tribe around him, visited the valley, and claimed it as the birthright of his people. He then became the founder of a new tribe or band, which received the name "Yosemite."

DISCOVERY OF GOLD IN CALIFORNIA

The discovery of gold, February 2, 1848, by James Marshall, near Coloma on the American River, brought a stampede of gold seekers to California, and there came about a great change with the Indians. A serious situation was thrust upon the Indian tribes in and about Yosemite Valley, when, on the discovery of gold, miners by the thousands flocked into California. Miners staked their claims on the Indian's territory, cut his acorn trees for fuel, hunted his game for food, destroyed his bulbous roots in digging for gold, invaded his family, and taking young Indian women, willing or not, for servants and wives.

Suffering from loss of food and territory the Indians made raids on the whites, taking what they could from the trading posts, stealing horses, burning houses, even murdering, then fleeing to the mountains. A deadly hate was engendered. The Indian would drive the last miner from his territory. The whites determined to subjugate the Indians, and kill all of them if necessary.

INDIAN WAR OF 1850 - 1851

When the white men flocked into the foothills of the Sierra Nevada mountains in search of gold, it was not long before difficulties arose with the Indians. What happened here was the same thing that had happened everywhere on the frontier, the red man had to give way to the white; but he did not do so without a struggle. This struggle, it is true, was short, since the California Indians were not capable of maintaining a long contest. The war in the Mariposa country was only one episode in the red man's fight which we need to consider in this connection.

In the beginning of 1850, James D. Savage had a trading post and mining camp on the Merced River some 20 miles below the Yosemite Valley, which at that time was known to only a few whites. During the spring of that year Indians supposedly belonging to the tribe known as the Yosemite made an attack on this post. They were driven off, but Savage thought it best to abandon the place and remove his store to Mariposa Creek. He also established a branch post on the Fresno River.

Savage had several Indian wives, and obtained a really remarkable influence over the Indian tribes with which he was connected. But there were malcontents among them, and the tribes in the mountains were suspicious and easily incited to acts of hostility.

On December 17, 1850, Savage's Indians deserted the Mariposa camp, and on the same or the following day his post on the Fresno was attacked, and two of the three men there present were killed. Several other similar outrages occurred soon thereafter, which started the beginning of a general Indian war.

THE MARIPOSA BATTALION

Under these circumstances the white settlers took prompt action to protect themselves. Under the leadership of Sheriff James Burney and James D. Savage, a volunteer company was formed, January 6, 1851, with Burney in command. This force had several indecisive skirmishes with the Indians. Meanwhile, the governor had been appealed to, and he immediately authorized Sheriff Burney to call out 200 militiamen, and organize a battalion for service as the emergency might demand.

Under this authorization the Mariposa Battalion was formed, February 10, at Savage's partially ruined store on Mariposa Creek. Savage was elected major, Burney having declined to be a candidate for the position. Three companies were organized under command of Captains John J. Kuykendall, John Bowling, and William Dill. Headquarters were established on Mariposa Creek, and here the battalion was drilled in preparation for the campaign, and occasional scouting forays were made into the enemy's country.

INDIAN COMMISSIONERS

At the same time that Governor McDougal issued his order for the calling out of the militia he appealed for cooperation to the United States Indian Commissioners, McKee, Barbour, and Wozencraft, who had just arrived in California with instructions to make treaties

with the Indian tribes. It was agreed that the commissioners would go at once to the affected region and endeavor to treat with the hostile tribes. If negotiations failed, force would be used to bring the Indians to terms.

The commissioners arrived at the Mariposa camp about the 1st of March, and immediately sent out runners inviting the various tribes to come in and have a talk. A meeting was arranged for the 9th of March, and on the 19th, a treaty was made with six tribes, which were at once removed to a reservation between the Merced and the Tuolumne rivers. The commissioners then went on to talk with the tribes south of the Merced River and left part of the volunteer battalion to deal with the Indians who had refused to enter into the treaty.

Among the tribes which had agreed to come in to talk with the commissioners was one which the latter called the "Yosemetos," and which Adam Johnson, the Indian agent, refers to as the "Yosemite." This tribe had failed to appear, and reports brought in by friendly Indians indicated that they had no intention of coming in. It was, therefore, deemed necessary to send a military force after them.

On the evening of March 19, Major Savage set out with the companies of Captains Bowling and Dill. On the morning of the 22nd, a Nuchu rancheria on the South Fork of the Merced River was surprised and captured without a fight. At this point a camp was established, and messengers were sent ahead to the Yosemite with a request that they come into camp. Next day the old chief Teneiya came in alone, and after an interview with Savage promised that if allowed to return to his people he would bring them in. He was allowed to go. The next day he came back and said his people would soon come to camp. The day passed and no Indians appeared. Major Savage, growing impatient, set out on the morning of March 25, with a part of his command, taking the old chief along with him as guide. After a little while they met a company of seventy-two Indians on the trail, and Teneiya said that these were all of his people except some who had gone over the mountains, Savage replied, "There are but few of your people here, your tribe is large, I am going to your village to see your people, who will not come with you. They will come with me if I find them."

DISCOVERY OF YOSEMITE VALLEY

Teneiya was allowed to go to the camp on the South Fork with his people, but Savage took one of his young braves as a guide, and continued his march toward the north. Within a short time the company came to old Inspiration Point, and the full view of the valley was presented to their gaze. It must be confessed, however, that the scenic wonder of the valley made very slight impression on these rough men of action, and without much ado they hastened down the trail and camped for the night on the south side of the Merced River, a little below El Capitan. The day of Savage's discovery was March 25, 1851.

As the tired campaigners sat about the camp fire that night the events of the day were passed in review, and the question arose of giving a name to the valley which they had found. Dr. L. H. Bunnell, upon whom the scenes and events of this campaign made a deeper impression than upon any of the others, suggested the appropriateness of naming it after the aborigines who dwelt there. The suggestion was agreed to after some good natured banter, and since the white men called these Indians Yosemite the name Yosemite was given to the valley, rather than the more melodious Indian name Awani (Ahwahnee) which already belonged to it.

The next day was spent in a search of the valley, but no Indians were found save an ancient squaw who was too old and decrepit to make her escape. The villages had been deserted. Much corn, nuts, seeds, and grass were stored in caches. The valley was thoroughly explored by the volunteers. The search proved fruitless, and as the supplies were running low, it was decided to abandon the chase, and return to the camp on the South Fork.

From there the Indians who had been gathered together were started toward the commissioners camp on the Fresno River, but before they arrived at their destination the negligence of the guard permitted them to escape, and they returned to their mountain home. On the 29th of April, the commissioners made a treaty with 16 tribes of Indians, and placed them on a reservation.

SECOND EXPEDITION TO YOSEMITE

A second expedition against the Yosemite was sent out to bring the Old Chief to terms. May 1851, when this expedition entered the valley, it was seen that a few huts had been rebuilt, and there was evidence that Indians had been living in them, though not one was to be found. At length, five Indians were discovered among rocks and trees, but these were soon captured.

Three of these Indians were sons of Chief Teneiya, the other two were young braves. One of the sons was sent to tell Teneiya that he and his people would be safe if they would come in and make peace with the white men. Teneiya refused to come in, he insisted on staying in the mountains. But soon the scouts brought Teneiya in, where he learned of the death of his sons, who were shot by the soldiers for trying to escape. Some days later Teneiya attempted to escape but was caught before he plunged into the river. Angry, he cried out to the Captain, "Kill me, yes kill me, as you killed my people."

With several scouts, and Teneiya as guide, the Captain went in search of the Yosemite who he knew were not far away. When well up Tenaya Canyon, one of the scouts pointed to a cloud of smoke, which revealed an Indian Village about two miles away on the banks of a beautiful lake. The inhabitants were soon captured; thirty-five were taken prisoners, all of whom belonged to Teneiya's family, among them his four squaws. They had fled to the mountains without food or clothing, and were worn out. They had hoped to go to the Monos. As the Soldiers left the lake they named it "Lake Tenaya" though the Chief protested, "It has a name, we call it Py-we-ack, or Lake of the Shining Rocks." And from here the captives were taken to the Fresno Reservation, where they arrived about June 10, 1851.

Teneiya and his people soon tired of the reservation and restrictions. All that had made life interesting and joyous was gone, and they longed for the mountain huts without walls, and their former freedom to hunt food. Life was humiliating to the old chief, and after a few months. he begged to return to his territory, and gave his pledge. He was allowed to go and take his family with him. With this remnant Teneiya returned to his beloved and secluded home, Ahwahnee.

EXPEDITION OF 1852

On May 20, 1852, a party of eight prospectors started from Coarse Gold Gulch on a trip to the upper waters of the Merced River. They had just entered the Yosemite Valley when they were set upon by a band of Indians, and two of them, named Rose and Shurborn, were killed, and a third badly wounded. The others got away, and after enduring great hardships arrived again at Coarse Gold Gulch on the

2nd of June. The same day about 30 or 40 miners set out to punish the treacherous Yosemite. This party found and buried the bodies of the murdered men, but were compelled to return without punishing the perpetrators of the deed.

The commander at Fort Miller having been informed of these events, sent a detachment of regular soldiers under Lieut. Moore, with scouts and guides, at once into the mountains. On arriving in the Yosemite Valley this expedition surprised and captured five Indians wearing or carrying clothing belonging to the murdered men. They were summarily shot. The remainder of the Yosemite with their old chief Teneiya made their escape, and fled over the mountains into the Mono country. The soldiers pursued but were unable to catch any of them. The party lost a few horses, killed by the Indians. They explored the region about Mono Lake, discovered some gold deposits, and then returned to the fort on the San Joaquin by a route that led south of the Yosemite Valley. This expedition was made in June and July 1852.

DEATH OF TENEIYA

Teneiya and his little band stayed with the Monos until the autumn of 1853, when they returned to Yosemite Valley. They built their huts in the east end of the Valley. They obtained acorns from the oak trees, and hunted game; it was a good life in the secluded valley of Ahwahnee.

The Piutes and Monos had made successful raids on ranches and had captured a number of horses. Several of Teneiya's men went on a foraging expedition, and knowing it was safer to rob their allies than risk a raid on the whites, they succeeded in stealing a few horses from the Monos. In the Valley they felt secure, and after a few days had a feast of horse flesh. The Indians gorged themselves, and on crammed stomachs, slept soundly. The Monos, revengeful and warlike, pounced upon them, and before they could rally for the fight they dealt blows of death to the Yosemite, whom they had so recently fed and sheltered. The young chief of the Monos hurled a rock at old chief Teneiya whose skull was crushed by the blow. More rocks were hurled, and the last chief of the Yosemite lay stoned to death in his Ahwahnee. All but eight of Teneiya's young braves were killed. These made their escape through the canyon below. The women and children were made captives, and taken across the mountains. The once powerful cunning tribe of the Yosemite Indians was all but wiped out. Teneiya was the last chief of his people. He was killed by the chief of the Monos in retribution for a crime against the Mono's hospitality.

Teneiya's band was attached to this valley as a home. The instinctive attraction that an Indian has for his place of nativity is incomprehensible; it is more than a religious sentiment, it is a passion. Here they lived as in an earthly paradise, engaged in a grand hunt or festival, offered up religious sacrifices, and awakened the valley with echoes of their vociferous orations.

DID THE INDIANS LIVE IN VAIN

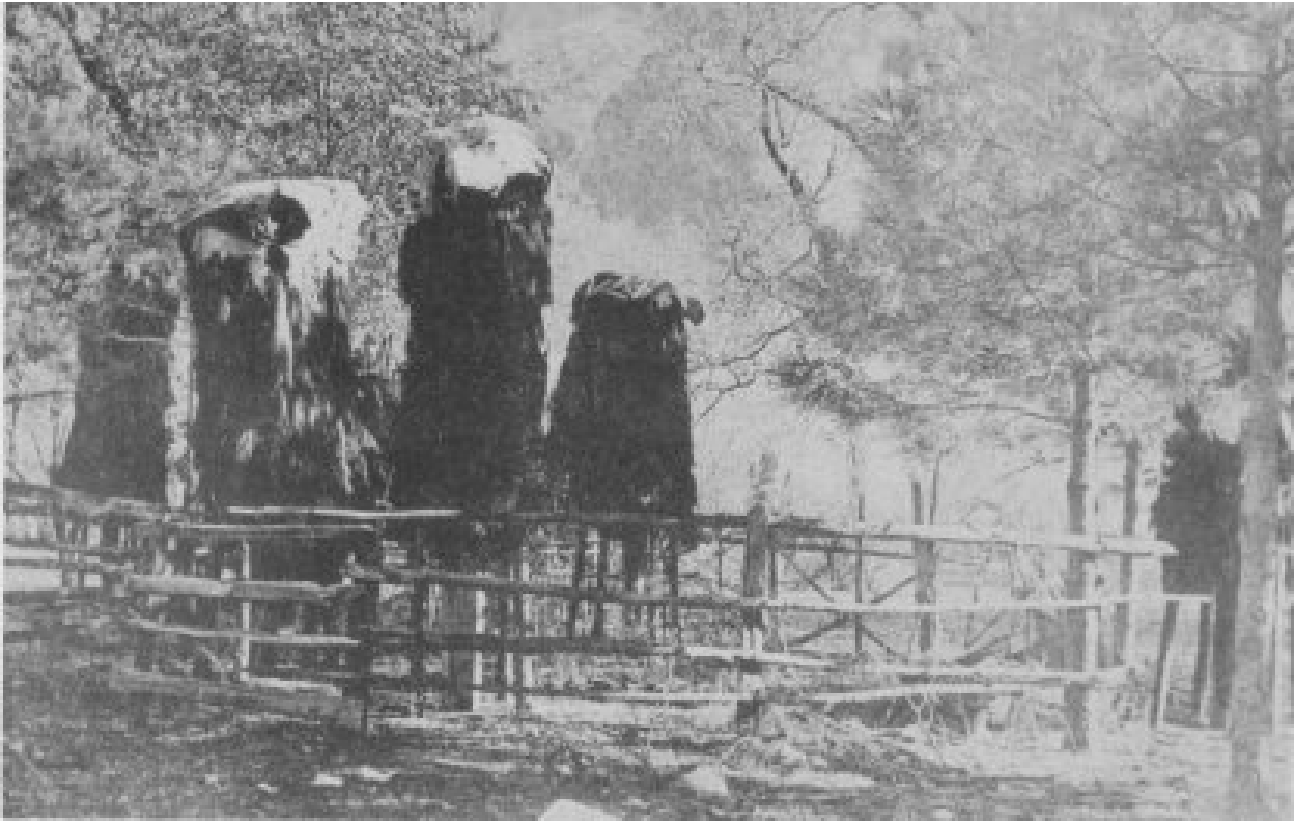
When we look back over the spectacle of Indian annihilation, the ruthless advance of the frontier crushing out the lives of Indians on every hand, though sacrificing a lot of white blood to achieve this end, we are moved to ask; "Did the Indians live in vain? Was all that they did, struggled for, fought for, for ten thousand years to be obliterated in three centuries,? Was it misplaced charity on the part of the victors to put their helpless victims on reservations, to be wasted by disease, hunger, and poverty, and later do everything possible to keep them alive merely to live as minorities in our midst?"

These and many other questions may rise to disturb our peace of mind, but there are no satisfactory answers. We can, however, look at the record to see what the Indian achieved, and what the world took from him without giving much in return.

CHAPTER II

INDIAN VILLAGE AND

CAMP SITES IN YOSEMITE VALLEY



Indian Cache

For ages before its discovery by white men, Yosemite Valley was inhabited by Indians. Owing to its isolated position and the abundance of mountain trout, quail, grouse, deer, bear and other game animals, and of acorns, manzanita berries, and other vegetable foods, it supported a large population. There were of three kinds; permanent villages, occupied the year round; summer villages, (May to October) after which the inhabitants moved down into the milder climate of the Merced Canyon; seasonal camps, for hunting and fishing. The camps were definitely located and each was regularly occupied at a particular season.

Some thirty-seven camps were counted, all of these were in the valley proper and at least six were occupied as late as 1898.

All of these people belonged to the Ahwahneechee or Ahwahnee Mew'wah. Their language is the southernmost of the three dialects of the once great Me'-wuk family, a family comprising a group of closely related tribes occupying the western foothills and lower slopes of the Sierra Nevada from Cosumnes River south to Fresno Creek. Yo-ham'-i-te being the name of the band inhabiting a large and important village on the south bank of Merced River at the site of the Sentinel Hotel. These Indians hunted the grizzly bear, whose name Oo-hOO'-ma-te or O-ham'-i-te - gave origin to their own. The tribe next north of the valley called the grizzly Oo-soo'-ma-te, which doubtless accounts for the euphonious form given by Bunnell and now universally accepted.

Names of all Indian camps are listed in the write-up 1917, by C. Hart Merriam. Sierra Club Bulletin, for reference.

DWELLINGS AND CLOTHING*

*Excerpts: From Galen Clark, Indians of Yosemite Valley and Vicinity.

Their winter huts, or O'chums, as they called them, were of a conical form, made with small poles, and covered with the bark of the incense cedar. A few poles ten or twelve feet long were set in the ground around an area of about twelve feet in diameter, with their tops tied together. The outside was then closely covered with long strips of the cedar bark, making it perfectly water-tight. An opening was left on the south side for an entrance, which could be readily closed with a portable door. An opening was also left at the top for the escape of the smoke, a fire being kindled in the center inside.

One of these huts would hold a family of a half-dozen persons, with all their household property, dogs included; and there is no other form of a single room dwelling that can be kept warm and comfortable in cold weather with so little fire, as this Indian O'-chum.

Their underbedding usually consisted of the skins of bears, deer, or elk, and the top covering was a blanket or robe made of the skins of small fur bearing animals, such as rabbits, hares, wildcats and foxes. The skins were cut in narrow strips, which were loosely twisted so as to bring the fur entirely around on the outside, and then woven into a wrap of strong twine made of fine, tough, fibrous bark of a variety of milkweed. These fur robes were very warm, and were also used as wraps when traveling in cold weather.

During the warm summer season they generally lived outside in brush arbors, and used their O'chums as storage places.

Their clothing was very simple and scant, before being initiated into the use of a more ample and complete style of covering while living at the reservations. The ordinary full dress for a man was simply a breechclout, or short hip-skirt made of skins; that for a woman was a skirt reaching from the waist to the knees, made of dressed deer-skin finished at the bottom with a slit fringe, and sometimes decorated with various fancy ornaments. Both men and women frequently wore moccasins made of dressed deer or elk skin. Young children generally went entirely nude.

CHARACTERISTICS

The Indians of the various tribes in this part of the Sierras vary somewhat in physical characteristics, but in general are of medium height, strong, lean and agile, and the men are usually fine specimens of manhood. They are rather light in color, but frequently rub their bodies with some kind of oil, which gives the flesh a much redder and more glossy appearance. The hair is black and straight, and the eyes are black and deep set. The beard is sparse, and in former times was not allowed to grow at all, each hair being pulled out with a rude kind of tweezers. They are naturally of a gentle and friendly disposition, but their experience with the white race has made them distant and uncommunicative to strangers. The young ones strive to live like the white people, and seem proud to adopt our style of dress, and manner of cooking. They all speak our language plainly, and attend the public schools near by, and acquire very readily the common rudiments of an education. Their old o'chum form of dwelling is now very seldom seen.

All the able-bodied men are ready and willing to work at any kind of common labor, and have learned to want nearly the same amount of pay as the white man for the same work.

As a rule, they are trustworthy, and when confidence is placed in their honesty it is very rarely betrayed.

FOOD, HUNTING, AND FISHING

The food supply of the Sierra Indians, was extensive and abundant, consisting of the flesh of deer, elk and mustang horses, together with fish, water-fowls, birds, acorns, berries, pine nuts, herbage and the roots of certain plants, all of which were easily obtained, mushrooms, fungi, grasshoppers, worms and the larvae of ants and other insects, were also eaten.

Their main effective weapons for hunting large game were their bows and obsidian pointed arrows. Their manner of hunting was either by the stealthy still hunt or a general turnout, surrounding a large area of favorable country and driving to a common center, where at close range the hunters could sometimes make an extensive slaughter.

When on the still hunt for deer in the brush, sparsely timbered foothills of the Sierra Range of mountains, or higher up in the extensive forests, some of the hunters wore for a headgear a false deer's head, by which deceptive device they were enabled to get to a closer and more effective range with their bows and arrows. This headdress was made of the whole skin of a doe's head, with a part of the neck, the head part stuffed with light material, the eye holes filled in with the green feathered scalp of a duck's head, and the top furnished with light wooden horns, the branching stems of the manzanita being generally used for this purpose. The neck part was made to fit on the hunter's head and fasten with strings tied under the chin. This unique style of headgear was used by some Indian hunters for many years after they had guns to hunt with.

They had various methods of catching fish with hook and line, with a spear, by weir traps in the stream, and by saturating the water with the juice of the soaproot plant. Before they could obtain fish hooks of modern make, they made them of bone. Their lines were made of the tough, fibrous, silken bark of the variety of milkweed or silkweed. Their spears were small poles pointed with a single tine of bone, which was so arranged that it became detached by the struggle of the fish, and was then held by a string fastened near its center, which turned it crosswise of the wound and made it act as an effective barb.

Their weir-traps were put in the rapids, and constructed by building wing dams diagonally down to the middle of the stream until the two ends came near together, and in this narrow outlet was placed a sort of wicker basket trap, made of long willow sprouts loosely woven together and closed at the pointed lower end, which was elevated above the surface of the water below the dam. The fish in going downstream, ran into this trap and soon found themselves at the lower end and out of the water.

The soap root was used at a low stage of water, late in summer. They dug several bushels of the bulbous roots and went to a suitable place on the bank, where the roots were pounded into a pulp and mixed with soil and water. This mixture, by the handful, was then rubbed on rocks out in the stream, which roiled the water and also made it foamy. The fish were soon affected by it, became stupid with a sort of strangulation, and rose to the surface, where they were easily captured by the Indians with their scoop baskets.

RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES AND BELIEFS

The Indians of this region, in common with most, if not all, of the North American, were of a highly religious temperament, most devout in their beliefs and observances and easily wrought upon by the priests or medicine men of their tribes. Elaborate ceremonies were carried out, in which all of the details were highly symbolical, and some of their curious and picturesque superstitions were responsible for acts of cruelty and vengeance, which in many cases were foreign to their natural disposition.

DANCES

Dancing was an important part of all religious observances, and was practiced purely as a ceremonial, and never for pleasure or recreation. Both men and women took part, the men executing a peculiar shuffling step which involved a great deal of stamping upon the ground with their bare feet, and the women performing a curious, sideways, swaying motion. Some of the dancers carried wands or arrows, and indulged in wild gesticulations. They usually circled slowly around a fire, and danced to the point of exhaustion, when others would immediately take their places. The ceremony was accompanied by the beating of rude drums, and by a monotonous chant, which was joined in by all the dancers.

The great occasions for dancing were before going to war, and when cremating the bodies of their dead. The war dance was probably the most elaborate in costume and other details, and of recent years the Indians have sometimes given public exhibitions.

MARRIAGE

Many of the Indians in Mariposa and adjoining counties were polygamists, having two or three, and sometimes more wives.

Every man who took a young woman for his wife had to buy her. Young women were considered by their parents as personal chattels, subject to sale to the highest suitable bidder, and the payment of the price constituted the main part of the marriage ceremony. The wife was then the personal property of the husband, which he might sell or gamble away if he wished; but such instances were said to be very rare.

It is said that in their marital relations they were as a rule strictly faithful to each other. Children were always treated in such a kind, patient, loving manner, that disobedience was a fault rarely known.

MEDICINE MEN

At the time of the settlement of California by the whites, every Indian tribe had its professional doctors or medicine men, who also acted as religious leaders. They were the confidential counselors of the chiefs and head-men of the tribes, and had great influence and control over the people. They claimed to be spiritual mediums, and to have communication with the departed spirits of some of their old and most revered chieftains and dear friends. They were thought to be endowed with supernatural powers, not only in curing all diseases, but also in making a well person sick at their pleasure, even at a distance; but when their sorcery failed to work on their white enemies and exterminate them, they lost the confidence of their followers to a large extent.

With the invasion of the white settlers came forced changes in their old customs and manner of living, and a new variety of epidemic and other diseases. When a doctor failed to cure these diseases, and several deaths occurred in quick succession in a camp, they believed the doctor was under the control of some evil spirit, and killed him.

After the Indians were given their freedom from the reservations in 1855 the old ones, subdued and broken-hearted, sickened and died very fast, and most of the men doctors were killed off in a few years.

Their most common mode of treatment in cases of sickness was to scarify the painful locality with the sharp edge of a piece of obsidian, and suck out the blood with the mouth. In cases of headache, the forehead was operated on; in a case of colic the abdomen was treated in the same way, as were also all painful swellings on any part of the body.

The doctors also made use of certain rare medicinal plants in treating some diseases. The Indian women have great faith in charms made of the pungent roots of some rare plants from the high mountain ranges, which they wear on strings around their necks, or on a string of beads, to protect them from sickness.

DISPOSING OF THE DEAD

In the early days of the settlement of California, it seemed to be the universal custom of the Indians along the foothills of the Sierra Nevada Range of mountains to burn the bodies of their dead.

A suitable pile of readily combustible wood was prepared. The body was taken charge of by persons chosen to perform the last sacred rites, and firmly bound in skins, or blankets, and then placed upon the funeral pyre, with all the personal effects of the deceased, together with numerous votive offerings from friends and relatives. The chief mourners of the occasion seemed to take but little active part in the ceremonies. When all was ready, one of the assistants would light the fire, and the terrible, wailing, mournful cry would commence, and the professional chanters with peculiar sidling movements and frantic gestures, would circle round and round about the burning pile. Him-i-la-ya, was used by the cryers. When they became exhausted, others would step in and take their places, and thus keep up the mournful ceremony until the whole pile was consumed.

After the pile had cooled, the charred bones and ashes were gathered up, a few pieces retained, some would be sent to distant relatives, and the others pounded to a fine powder, then mixed with pine pitch and plastered on the faces of the nearest female relatives as a badge of mourning, to be kept there until it naturally wore off. Every Indian camp used to have some of these hideous looking old women in it in the "early days."

One principal reason for burning the bodies of the dead was the belief that there is an evil spirit, waiting and watching for the animating spirit or soul to leave the body, that he may get it to take to his own world of darkness and misery. By burning the perishable body they thought that the immortal soul would be more quickly released and set free to speed to the happy spirit world in the El-o'-win, or far distant West, while with their loud, wailing cries the evil spirit was kept away.

The young women take great care of their long, shining, black hair, which they all feel very proud of, as adding much to their personal beauty, and they seldom have it cut before marriage. But upon the death of a husband the wife has her hair all cut off and burned with his body, so that he may still have it in his future spirit home, to love and caress as a memento of his living earth-wife.

In recent years the Yosemite and other remnants of tribes closely associated with them, have adopted the custom of the white people, and bury their dead. The fine expensive blankets, and most beautifully worked baskets, which have been kept sacredly in hiding for many years, to be buried with the owner, are now cut into small fragments before being deposited in the ground, for fear some white person will desecrate the grave by digging them up and carrying them away.

There are no people in the world who show more reverence for their dead, or hold their memory more sacred, than these so-called "Digger" Indians.

RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

The old Indians are all very reticent regarding their religious beliefs. They hold them too sacred to be exposed to possible ridicule, and it is therefore very difficult to get information from them by direct question.

They felt their original ancestors, in the past, dwelt in a better and much more desirable country than this, in the El-o'-win, or distant West, and that by some misfortune or great calamity they were separated from that happy land, and became wanderers in this part of the world. They also believe that the spirits of all good Indians will be permitted, after death, to go back to that happy country of their ancestors origin; but that the spirits of bad Indians have to serve another earth life in the form of a grizzly bear, as a punishment for their former crimes. Hence, no Indians ever eat bear meat if they know it. All the old Indians are spiritualists, and very superstitious in their religious beliefs.

They all have a great fear of evil spirits, which they believe have the power to do them much harm and defeat their undertakings. They also have a fairly distinct idea of a Deity or Great Spirit, who never does them any harm, and whose home is in the happy land of their ancestors in the West.

BASKETRY

The twining and coiling methods were used chiefly by Yosemite Indian women in weaving baskets. In the twined basket, the heavy foundation is vertical from the center to the rim, and the woof is of lighter material. In the coiled basket, the heavy foundation is laid in horizontal coils around the basket with the filling running spirally around heavy twigs.

Willow, squaw bush, red-bud, tule-root, red strips of bark from Creek Dogwood, maiden-hair fern, brake fern, wire bunch grass, and other native plants served the Indian woman as material for the many baskets needed to properly perform her domestic tasks. She knew the names of all the basket material plants, their locations, and the proper time for gathering them as well as any botanist.

After gathering the materials, a further knowledge of how to prepare them for weaving was necessary. They had to be peeled, trimmed to correct width, fineness and length, soaked in cold water, boiled or buried in mud, according to her knowledge of the treatment required. Roots of the brake fern were boiled in order to obtain the black material used in designs; red-bud was employed for the red color.

Considering that the Indian woman worked entirely without written rules, the design, color, and the mathematical accuracy of her baskets in entirety represent a work of art.

INDIAN LEGENDS

Living close to nature as did the Indians, in constant close relationship with animals, plants, and other natural features, it is easy to understand how their religion, their superstitions, and their legends should center around the great cliffs and spires, the waterfalls, animals, and even the winds which they knew in their daily existence. As is characteristic of primitive peoples without a written alphabet, the legends of the Yosemite Indians were handed down by word of mouth, from generation to generation. It is reasonable to assume that elaborations developed with the passing of time.

Numerous Indian Legends have been written and are available in bookstores.

BOWS AND ARROWS

Their bows were made of a branch of the incense cedar or of the California nutmeg, made flat on the outer side, and rounded smooth on the inner or concave side when the bow is strung for use. The flat, outer side was covered with sinew, usually that from the leg of a deer, steeped in hot water until it became soft and glutinous, and then laid evenly and smoothly over the wood, and so shaped at the ends as to hold the string in place. When thoroughly dry the sinew contracted, so that the bow when not strung was concave on the outer side. When not in use the bow was always left unstrung.

The primitive weapons, which were in universal use by the Yosemite Indians years ago, are now never seen except in some collections of Indian relics and curios.

Other articles manufactured by these tribes were stone hammers, and also others made from the points of deer horns mounted on wooden handles, which they used in delicately chipping the brittle obsidian in forming arrowheads. Rude musical instruments, principally drums were also made.

NOTE*

[*These excerpts taken from "Indians of Yosemite Valley and Vicinity" by Galen Clark, may well help to explain how the old time Indian lived before white people invaded his domain. Pg. 13 - 21

INDIAN FIELD DAYS IN YOSEMITE

The first record of Indian Field Days was August 7, 1916, when one hundred and fifty Piute, Mono, Digger, and Yosemite Indians gathered to lend their quaint and picturesque presence to the scene. The Desmond Company gave \$100 in prizes for the contests and races, and gave toys to the numerous Indian children. They gave a barbecue for the Indians on the plaza of Yosemite Falls Camp. From one o'clock when the Parade of the Indians began the march from the village, till the war dance ended in late evening, the dusky people reveled enthusiastically.

For the Indian baby show at 4 o'clock, no less than 1500 people gathered around the contestants to judge the types of healthy babyhood.

These Indian Field Days were held in Yosemite every summer, about August 1. Chief Ranger Townsley was responsible for the management of these events. August 1924, was the last celebration, as it was thought too commercial for the Park Service to permit these gatherings. The cowboys from the outside competed in the races and games, soon there were arguments and dissatisfaction. So, therefore, the Director of the Parks ended the Indian Field Days.

YOSEMITE PIONEER CEMETERY

The Yosemite Pioneer Cemetery was laid out during the last century perhaps as early as 1870. At that time Yosemite Valley was under the guardianship of the State of California.

Early pioneers had been buried in various places in the valley. Later the graves that were known were moved to this location. In 1906 the cedar trees were planted and the fence that surrounds the cemetery was put in place.

Bits of information on Indian graves in the cemetery were gathered from many sources, including interviews with Indians living in Yosemite. Without a doubt untold burials took place there in the early days without any records.

Cremation was practiced by the Ahwahneeches living in pre-discovery Yosemite. The last ceremony of this kind in the Valley was upon the death of a nephew of Chief One-Eye Dick, killed in a hunting accident about 1873.

The earliest recorded Indian burial was that of Kosano, father of Ta-bu-ce, about 1875. He was buried just south of the large rock that is seen near the southeast corner of the museum.

Many Pioneers of note are buried there along with many Indians. You may enjoy a walk through the Yosemite Pioneer Cemetery, turning back the pages of time for a little while to forget some of the worries of our modern age.

CHAPTER III

BIOGRAPHIES OF INDIANS PAST AND PRESENT



Phoebe Wilson Lovine Hogan

PHOEBE WILSON LOVINE HOGAN

Born March 15, 1886, in Merced Falls, California. Tribe Chumhunchee. Phoebe's father was Frank (Hooky) Wilson, born about 1840 near Bear Valley, Mariposa County, California. His only relative mentioned was a sister (Calpeen). As the custom goes, when a person died his name was dead, never mentioned except as someone's aunt, uncle, or brother. Hooky was a great hunter, was Captain of his tribe. He operated a threshing machine rig some years in Merced County. He died in 1919.

Phoebe's mother, known as Marguerite, her Indian name was Yo Wo' Ko' Chee, was born 1856, near Coulterville, California. She was very active in Indian affairs and ceremonies, and was a Captain. She died in 1930, and was buried in Madera, California.

There were four sons, John, Frank, Montana, and Westley. (The last one,) Westley has made his home in Yosemite since 1927. There were six daughters, Elizabeth, Olena, Bess, Sophia, June, and Phoebe. Only three from this family remain living today. June lives in Capitola, California, Westley and Phoebe in Yosemite.

When the family was very young, they lived near Merced Falls, California, where some worked in the woolen mills and flour mills in order to make a living. Phoebe went to school in Merced Falls to the eighth grade. She had to quit at thirteen to work and help support the family. She actually started to work and helped at the age of ten, by washing dishes for Mrs. J. Barrett in Merced Falls, and helped with the housework. Barretts ran a resort and stopping place for stages and freight wagons. At the age of thirteen she cooked for thirty-five men, for Mr. Kelsey who was a fig grower near Merced Falls. The work was too hard, so she had to quit. The pay was fifteen dollars per month. During her teens she had a good time with her family and young friends, went to picnics, church meetings, and dances at Snelling and Hornitos.

January 12, 1906, Phoebe married Perl E. Lovine, (white) who was working on the Yosemite Valley railroad between Merced and El Portal, California. He also worked the historic Stage Company, for Kenney and Coffman, and later the Yosemite Park Company at Kenneyville in Yosemite Valley. He was born November 18, 1889, in Indiana. He and Phoebe separated and he left for parts unknown.

There were five children from this marriage. Pearl was born June 16, 1907, in Merced Falls, California. She died in 1954, after an operation. She married Nicholas Brochini, and they had four children: Evelyn, Laurance, John, and Edward. And a second marriage was to Jim Rust: they had three children: Joan Marie, Beverly Ann, and James Calvin.

Evelyn was born August 1, 1909, in Madera, California. She married Doctor Shoemaker of San Francisco, California, September 2, 1939. The Doctor practiced in St. Joseph Hospital. Evelyn was a nurse. They had no children. Doctor Shoemaker died, in 1960 from a heart attack.

Mary J. was born 1916, in Madera, California. She married a man by the name of William Skipper, who was in the Navy, and lived in Florida for some years. Later he was assigned to some branch of the service in Washington, D. C. They separated for some reason not mentioned. They had one daughter, Barbara Lee, (Dolly). Mary J. has returned to California to be near her mother. Her daughter, Barbara Lee, Phoebe's granddaughter, married Robert Norman Kester, Jr., of Canoga Park, California. They have three children, Kenneth Duane, Norman James, and Karen Darlene.

A son Kenneth was born June 6, 1911, in Madera, California. He married Alice Geary, of Idaho. They had three daughters: Arlene, Carol, and Sharon. Kenneth is an electrician, and they have made their home in Fresno, California.

A son Allen E. was born June 17, 1913, in Madera, California. He attended Sherman Indian School, in Riverside, California, the Riverside Junior College, and State Teachers College. He was a teacher at the Stewart Indian School in Nevada. He was a famous ball player, and received many prizes and ribbons for his outstanding record. He married Eloese, a Spanish American from Arizona.

During World War II he was commissioned a First Lieutenant in the Infantry. He was killed in battle, March 27, 1945, near Boppard, Germany. He was buried in the United States Military Cemetery, in St. Avold, France, with full military honors. He received a number of medals, including the Purple Heart for valor.

In 1930, Phoebe married Clarence L. Hogan, of the Mariposa tribe. This marriage lasted only seven years, as Clarence got into trouble with his family and assaulted his wife Phoebe, for some reason (perhaps too much "Fire Water"). He was taken before the U. S. Commissioner in Yosemite and was ordered to leave the Park until such time as he could straighten himself out and not cause any more trouble. He made his home in Mariposa, until his death, in 1965.

Phoebe moved to Yosemite in 1927, from Madera, California, and made her home first in the Old Indian Village. Later, in 1931, she moved to a new cabin in the New Indian Village, west of the Yosemite Lodge. She worked steadily for the Yosemite Park and Curry Company, in the laundry and dry cleaning plant. She said her first pay was three dollars per day. It took steady work to make a living, but it was good, and the family lived well all through the depression. She worked hard and held her job. She was a guiding influence, and acted as Captain to the others in the village. She helped the other Indians that did not fare so well, during the lean years.

The "new" Indian Village was built by the Park Service in 1931. There were 15 cabins built under rental fee. This was a wonderful improvement over the old shanties and bark huts, and many odd shelters which characterized the old village. The Indians enjoyed this new way of living, with piped water, and a rest room in the circle of cabins. Here the families reared their children and sent them to the local school. The men worked for the National Park Service and the Yosemite Park and Curry Company. Some of the women made baskets and worked at the museum giving demonstrations, making acorn meal, and cakes.

The population in 1927, was around one hundred; in the past few years it has dwindled to some thirty odd.

Phoebe, a guiding influence, has tried to hold together the few remaining families, and cooperated with the "powers that be." She has been concerned about their living conditions, which need some improvements. I hope the Park will be able to provide better living conditions for these people. Phoebe in her 80th year is alert and interested in the Park welfare, as well as the people who live and work there.

My contacts and visits with her in the past few years were most interesting, and helpful to me in writing up the short history of these people.

There has been much concern and controversy between the park superintendents, and the director's office of the National Park Service in Washington, as to the welfare of the local Indians. The long acceptance of their presence there has established a vested right to residence in Yosemite, which after all was the original home of these Yosemite Indians. It is only fitting and proper that these good people who live here be given permanent homes. It has been written, and recorded many times in the history of our State and Government, "treatment of our Indians is one of the blackest marks against our government." True, but National Park Service is not the Indian Office.

There is no question but that the living conditions in our present Indian Village should be improved. For the older ones, who wish to remain to live out their lives where sentiment and customs are uppermost in their minds, their homes should be made modern for these people that struggled through many years and low standards of living. The good members who work for the Park should be given modern housing along with our regular employees. Much more could be written about this. It is hoped that the Park Service will do all it can for these deserving people. The U. S. Indian Bureau might find funds to, improve the houses?

MARIA LABRADO

Born 1841, a full-blooded Yosemite. Maria was the grand-daughter of the Old Yosemite Chief Teneiya. She was one of the seventy-two Indians who were forced to leave Yosemite Valley at the insistence of Major James D. Savage, in March, 1851.

Her first husband was a full-blooded Yosemite Indian; they had a large family and she left four living daughters when she died. Four sons, Leandro, Cruz, Pietro, and Angelo all met a tragic death in their early lives. Her daughter Mary was a full-blood.

Her second husband was a Mexican whose name was Lebrado; they had three children, Andrea, Francisco, and Grace. The four daughters living at her death were Mary, Grace, Frances, and Andrea.

Much has been written about Maria. It might interest the reader to read "The Return of the Last Survivor," by Mrs. H. J. Taylor, Yosemite Nature Notes.

In the early 1920's Carl P. Russell, Yosemite National Park Naturalist, first "discovered" Maria as the last of the original Yosemite Indians, and led Mrs. H. J. Taylor to write two small books about Maria.

Park Naturalist Harwell in 1934, made a visit to the daughters of Maria, near Bear Creek, Mariposa County; he reported, "Mary was living with her sister Frances Avilla, who was caring for her, as her mind was failing, only able to mumble a few words, but was able to walk despite her eighty or more years. Frances explained that Mary was the daughter of "Old Indian Bob," who lived near Nipinnawassee. Mary did not know how many children in their family, she thought about ten. Mary's last husband was Jim Leonard."

Grace Anchor, a sister of Mary and Frances, lived nearby, she married a Swiss German who was employed in Yosemite Park as a powder man on road and trail work.



Mary Lebrado's Cabin at Bear Creek

During this visit Mr. Harwell and party visited the grave of Maria, in the neatly kept cemetery on top of the hill near the Anchor's cabin. The following inscription on a card of the undertaking firm was at the head of her grave, "Maria Ydaretes died, April 14, 1931."

Lebrado operated a pack train at Bear Creek. He was a small Mexican who came here from Bodie, California. He raised a large family of Mexicans. When his wife died, he moved in with the Indians and lived with Maria.

It will be noted that many Indian families took on Spanish or Mexican names upon their association with these people.

Maria told Mrs. H. J. Taylor, that two or three weeks after the Chief (Teneiya) was stoned to death, the halfbreed, Tom Hutchings, brought Teneiya's bones to the South Fork, in a buckskin, and according to their custom a three-day funeral was held. She said, "We give Teneiya nice funeral, much Indians come, much cry, dance, sing, no sit, no eat, three days sing, dance all time, then burn bones, and made ashes go."

According to Maria Lebrado in 1930, "The sole surviving full-blooded Yosemitees were herself, a daughter, a nephew; all of the others deceased long years ago."

Maria's last visit to the Valley were full of memories. Emotionally she lived over the tragic events of her life, events that have long since passed into cold, historical data.

LANCISCO WILSON

His birth and early life unknown. He was one of the Chiefs of the Yosemitees. He was the father of Johnny Wilson. He died, 1885, buried in the Yosemite cemetery.

SUSIE SAM

Susie was a Yosemite Indian, born in Yosemite, age unknown. Her husband was Captain Sam. Old Captain Sam was employed by Camp Curry, and the Sentinel Hotel, to supply them with fish for the tourists' meals. Susie died 1904, and was buried in the Yosemite cemetery.

LOUISA WESTFALL HILLIARD

Born March 20, 1856. Yosemite tribe. Her father had no white name, was one of the Chiefs who lived in the valley before white men came. Louisa's brother was Pete Hilliard. It is reported perhaps Louisa lived most of her early life in Yosemite. She was about 100 years old when she died in 1952.

CHARLIE DICK

Born 1857, near Mono Lake, California. A Piute. His wife was Mary. A sister was Sally Ann. They had three sons; Frank lives in Sonora, California, where he worked for the lumber company for some time. Roland died some years ago. John, no record at this time.

Charlie was a wood cutter for Yosemite National Park many years. He was the first to operate a power saw. He cut many cords of wood for the Park. When he became too old, and was no longer wanted as a wood cutter, he died, about 1930, and was buried in Coulterville, California.

DAN HOWARD

Born in 1880, near Mariposa, California. His father was Captain of the tribe. He married Maggie (Tabuce) and lived and worked in Yosemite many years. He died in 1960, and was buried in the Catholic cemetery in Mariposa, California.

BRIDGEPORT TOM

Born in 1860, near Bridgeport, California. He had two wives, Louisa and Leanna, who were sisters. Between them they had ten children. Four of them became permanent residents in Yosemite Indian Village by marriage to local Yosemite Indians.

Tom was not a medicine man but it was claimed he could heal through the spirit. It was recorded that he made the remark once, about the Giant Yellow pine in the Yosemite Valley, that there would be some connection with his death, that he would die when the tree died; this prophecy came true.

Tom had many friends among both Indians and whites. When a young man, he was a rider for a large cattle ranch near Bridgeport, California. He was industrious, bought land and cattle, raised grain and potatoes, also raised fine horses to sell and trade. His first home ranch was in Bloody Canyon, not far from Mono Lake.

The family would usually travel across the mountains to Yosemite Valley in summer to gather acorns and trade with the Yosemite Indians, and of course always get in the gambling games, and feasts of the tribe, always returning to his home ranch in the fall before the storms closed the high mountain passes.

Tom's family had plenty to eat, which wasn't so with some of the other Indians. He raised wheat and took it to Bishop, to get it ground into flour. When he killed a beef he would supply meat to the needy neighbors.

When the Los Angeles Water Aqueduct took over all the water rights in that area, Tom was forced to sell out, as there would be no water to use for his crops. He moved to Coleville, California, where he bought land, and made his home until his death in 1938.

His wife Leanna, nearly 100 years old, and now totally blind and very feeble, is living on this property.

Louisa died, January 14, 1956, and was buried in the Yosemite cemetery. Children by Louisa were: Lena, Lucy, Alice, Sara, Harry, and Mack. By Leanna: Tom had Agnes, Lillian, Maime, and Ida. Of all these children only one remains living today, Agnes Castro, who lived in Yosemite until their retirement end of 1965. They now live in Mariposa, California.

Reports are that approximately seventy-five children and grandchildren were born to this family, some of whom we know very little about.

MAGGIE "TABUCE" HOWARD

Born in 1870, near Bridgeport, California, a Piute. Her father was Joaquin Sam, or Kosana. Maggie lived near Bridgeport until her mother died, then went to live with her father near Mono Lake. Her family made many trips over the mountains to Yosemite to gather acorns, and trade with the Yosemiteites.

At Mono Lake they collected the pupa of a certain fly which breeds on the shores of Mono Lake. With this Ka-cha-vee and acorns they lived well.

On one trip crossing the mountains her father's horse was frightened, and threw him on a rock. Some Indians picked him up and brought him to Yosemite Valley. They thought he was dead. The story of "Kosana" as it was told, is that late in the fall of 1875, a small group of Indians from the Mono Lake Country had crossed the Sierra, to gather acorns. When they had finished, they started their return trip over the high pass, but were forced to turn back because of a heavy snow storm. Among this group was an old man named Kosana, a medicine man, more than 80 years old, and not strong. He died after the exposure and the strenuous trip into the Valley. His followers set up camp near the site of the present park museum where they built their u-ma-cha, with canvas and long slabs of incense cedar bark.

Some white men made a fine coffin for the deceased Kosana, he was buried just south of the large rock that is seen near the southeast corner of the Yosemite Museum.

Kosana had a young daughter at the time of his death, who was none other than "Ta-bu-ce" or Maggie, as she was known by her many friends in later years. Ta-bu-ce is an Indian name meaning "grass nut" the name her mother gave her.

Maggie had three husbands: first was Jack Lundy, second Billy Williams, and third Dan Howard. She had two sons: Willie Mike Williams, and Simon Slim Lundy.

After Maggie was married, she and her oldest son William, her sister's daughter May Tom, age 14, and some others went up the Yosemite Falls trail, and camped somewhere in the upper Indian Canyon. This was after an Indian Festival. Maggie, after much dancing, was tired and went to sleep early. A high wind storm came up and blew down a large pine tree. Her niece May Tom was killed by this fallen tree. Maggie had her collar bone broken, her ankles and feet badly injured, and the bones in her right leg fractured. Her sister took her daughter to the Valley, and left Maggie for dead beneath the tree all night. The next day Charlie Dick and other Indians came for her. She doesn't remember what happened during that long night. A doctor in the Valley set the bones. All summer she lay in a cast, barely able to move her right hand to shoo away the flies. In the fall she was able to walk a little. She never fully recovered from this, always walking with a decided limp.

Maggie lived many years in Yosemite Valley, and was well known by many park visitors; for some years she was employed by the park museum to give demonstrations, making acorn meal and mush. She made many "Hikis," baskets, and sold them to visitors.

Death came to her January 25, 1947, and she was buried at Bishop, California, Too much snow at Mono Lake prevented the burial there, her preferred resting place.

SALLY ANN DICK

Born May 8, 1868, in Yosemite. Her mother was May Dick, a full-blooded Yosemite Indian. Charlie Dick was her brother. Sally was a beautiful Indian girl, when she was young she married a rich miner by the name of Stegeman. He took her to San Francisco, where they lived at the Palace Hotel. They had a carriage, and all the fine clothes she wanted, but soon she tired of all this life, and one night she ran away and returned to Yosemite, her old home.

Stegeman thought enough of her to follow her and returned to the Valley. Here he found employment in the Post Office, and was in charge of the express office.

One day Sally Ann rifled the Express Company till, took the bills and left the silver, wrapped the ten, twenty, and fifty dollar bills around her wrist, and went to the store. She bought many things. Angelo Cavagnaro was the store keeper. He was thoughtful enough to charge her double for everything, and of course turned the money back to Stegeman, her husband.

Sally married Johnny Brown after Stegeman died. She was full of life, and talkative. They lived in the Valley some years. Johnny Brown said, "She all the time running away, no stay home, no good." He beat her for running away but to no avail.

Later she went to Coulterville and married Johnny Castagetto, who ran a fruit and vegetable pack train to supply camps and stores around the County. They had a daughter named Marorie; it was reported she had been seriously ill, but recovered, and is now making her home with her uncle Frank in Sonora, California.

Sally Ann related one of her worst experiences. When the U.S. soldiers came to the Valley, about 1906, they set fire to her cabin and all her belongings, when they destroyed the early than Village, which was located on the Military headquarters site where the Yosemite Lodge now stands. The Indians fled in the night, and it took some of them a long time to get back.

Sally Ann died, April 10, 1932, and was buried in the Yosemite Valley cemetery.

PETE HILLIARD

Born in 1870, in El Capitan Meadow, in Yosemite Valley. He was half Yosemite, and half Chinese. Lived most of his life in Yosemite. He did many kinds of work. He was intelligent and versatile. He helped to survey the property of Bridgeport Tom's homestead in Bloody Canyon, when the latter first entered that region for farming. He worked for Yosemite National Park, ad the Yosemite Park Company, first drove a freight team, and later trucks, bringing in supplies to the Valley from the railroad station at El Portal. He also drove stage to and from the station.

Pete's first wife was Lula Rube. After her death, he married Emma Oliver, from the Yosemite tribe, about 1925. He had one daughter, Yolanda, born January 12, 1901. Reports of his other children all died of consumption, perhaps in their teens, no other record of this.

Pete's sister, named Jessie Branson, had four children: Bert, Fred, Hiram, and Dorothy.

Pete died, 1934, and was buried in the Yosemite Valley Cemetery.

FRANCISCO GEORGLY

Born about 1880, on the upper Chowchilla, Mariposa County. Belonged to the Ah-hom-et tribe.

It is reported he was welcomed by the tribe, as he was first-born of a noted Chief. His early youth was spent among the Indians, and he learned to speak three dialects perfectly, namely Chuc-chance, Ah-hom-eta, and Mono.

At an early age he was converted to the Christian faith, and was taken by a priest to a Catholic school where he learned to read and write English. He served the priests in Merced and Coulterville as altar boy for many years.

On attaining manhood he went to Yosemite Valley, and became a picturesque guide. His proficiency in English and his many weird Indian stories made him much sought after. His proficiency in Indian, Spanish, and English caused him to be called as an interpreter in many noted murder cases in Mariposa and Fresno Counties.

Francisco took a Chuc-chance woman for wife, and she, Susan, survived him. He was a noted Indian dancer, and had more beads, shells, feathers, etc., to use at tribal dances than any of the tribe. He was always the leader in all festivities, and had great command over the members of his tribe, even the Captains and Medicinemen, answered his commands. He was a good musician, and every holiday he with his guitar, and Najo Figaro with his violin, furnished old time music to the younger generation of their tribe, to trip the light fantastic a la American, and many is the white man that took first steps in dancing under old Francisco's instructions.

He was an inveterate gambler, would quite a job anytime, and travel fifty miles to join in the Indian handgame.

Francisco died in Madera, California, after a severe stomach ailment. He was buried in the Catholic cemetery, in Merced, California. In the absence of a priest the Indian burial ceremonies were observed. About twenty Indians were present to perform the last rites. Many whites were present, and showed marked respect by their behavior while the weird ceremonies were in progress.

It was by great pleasure to know and ride herd on dude parties, with this fine character, in 1918, when we were Yosemite Guides. (JWB)

EDWARD HERN

Born June 14, 1881, near Mariposa, California. His father was (white). His mother, Betty Hogan Seton. His wife was Anna Priest, who is living near Midpines, California. They had seven children: Bert, Oliver, Ralph, Joe, Francis, Lillian and Berdie. Ed was a guide and

packer for Yosemite Park Company in Yosemite Valley for many years. Their home is near Midpines. Edward died, January 2, 1941, and was buried in the Hern cemetery, near Midpines.



Lucy Sam

[Editor's note: aka Lucy Brown, great-granddaughter Alice Roosevelt Wilson in a cradle basket, c. 1903. Alice is the daughter of Billy Wilson and Elizabeth George—DEA]

TOM LUPTON

Born 1834, near Mariposa, California. A nephew of Maria Lebrado. Had no known family. He lived and worked in the Park many years. He was involved in a fight and killed another Indian, and for this he had to serve ten years in San Quentin Prison. Years later, about 1928, some unknown assailant killed him, and his body was found by a hiker under an overhanging rock in the upper end of the Yosemite Valley. He was buried in the Indian cemetery at the foot of Lebrado Mountain, near Midpines, Mariposa County. Tom was one of the original Yosemite Indians, when white men discovered the Valley, in 1851.

LUCY (TOM) TELLES

Born 1885, near Mono Lake, California. A Piute. Daughter of Bridgeport Tom. Her mother was Louisa.

In the early days the family came across the mountains to Yosemite Valley to gather acorns, and visit with the Yosemite tribe. Lucy made friends with the whites, and worked for a number of the park families. Lucy was a famous basket maker; she made the largest basket ever made in Yosemite, which is in the park museum.

She married John Telles, in 1912, and they lived most of their married life in Yosemite Valley. They had one son John, (Jr.).

Her first marriage was to Jack Parker, a Piute. They had one son, Lloyd Parker. Her grandmother was Susie Sam. Grandfather was Captain Sam.

Lucy died, February 21, 1955, and was buried in Mariposa, California.

JOHN TELLES (SR.)

Born May 16, 1893, in Shafter, Texas. A Mexican. He came to California about 1912. At Mono Lake, he heard some men tell about some beautiful girls on the other side of the mountains. He started looking for them. He met Bridgeport Tom, and asked him where all the pretty girls were. Tom said, "I have beautiful daughters, they are over the mountains in Yosemite." So John set out for Yosemite, and soon met Lucy Tom, and they married. They lived in Yosemite, and El Portal for a while. In 1915 he worked for Mr. Wm. Sell, at the Lost Arrow Camp. In 1927, he started work for the National Park Service, and then for the Yosemite Park and Curry Company as janitor at the Yosemite Lodge.

They had one son John (Jr.) born in 1920. He served in World War II. He married Helen Polkenhorn, from Northfork, California. They had two children, David and Gerald. Gerald worked for the Park Sanitation Department. David served in the U. S. Army.

John (Jr.) was killed in 1952, when he was struck on his head with a bottle, by his wife, in a family quarrel. John drank to excess at times.

John's wife, Lucy, died in 1955, and he soon thereafter moved to Fresno, California. There he married Mrs. Epefania, a Mexican, with a son and a daughter, and they live happily together. John is a very friendly fellow, and a good worker, and neighbor.

But bad luck came to his grandson David. October 1963, in Yosemite Valley, David was arrested for the rape murder of Mrs. June Elaine Leonard, age 19. The arraignment took place before U. S. Commissioner Gene J. Ottonello, some 24 hours after the body of

Mrs. Leonard was found beaten and strangled, and left almost nude in a wooded area 100 yards off the roadway across from Camp Ground 4, in Yosemite Valley.

Telles, a soldier who was on leave before reassignment to Fort Devens, Mass., waived a preliminary hearing on the charges of first degree murder, and forcible rape. He was taken first to the Stanislaus County Jail in Modesto, pending transportation to Sacramento, California, for trial.

Mrs. Leonard, the mother of an 8-month old son, Clarence (Jr.), was beaten on the face and head. F. B. I. officers said Telles struck and beat her in her car, in which they had been riding. Her body was then dragged to the spot where a woman, a camper in the park, discovered it while on a stroll some 36 hours later.

The victim's husband, a wood cutter for a contractor who supplies firewood to the Yosemite Park and Curry Company told the F. B. I. he last saw his wife Wednesday.

On January 11, 1965, David Telles, the accused murderer, hanged himself in a jail cell in Sacramento, only hours before he was to stand trial for the fatal beating of the teenaged girl. Sheriff's deputies said he was found dangling from a noose fashioned from his own socks, and tied to an overhead ventilator.

CASTRO JOHNSON

Born May 22, 1885, in Bear Valley, Mariposa County. His father was Henry, his mother Mary Ann. He had one sister, Mrs. Laura Howard, of Clovis, California. His wife was Grace. They had one daughter, Ella Mae; a son David who died of valley fever some years ago.

Castro lived and worked in Yosemite many years, on road and trail crews. In later years he worked for the State Highway Department as laborer, on Highway 140. He died August 1963, and was buried in the Mariposa Catholic Cemetery.

WILLIAM JOHNSON

Born April 26, 1901, near Mariposa, California. Worked and lived in Yosemite Valley a number of years, on road and trail crews. He now makes his home in Mariposa, California.

ANDREW JOHNSON

Born November 30, 1903, in Bear Valley, Mariposa County. We was a brother of Castro Johnson. All through his school years hee played baseball and became quite famous, playing in some big teams. He lived and worked in Yosemite some years, on road and trail crews. From reports he had no family of his own.

ELI JOHNSON

Born near Mariposa, California. He had no wife or children. He was killed by a truck accident in 1925, near Mariposa, on the canyon road.

The following news story by May S. Corcoran, October 1926, may be of interest to our readers, and will give the particulars of this accident. "Eli Johnson, a full-blooded Indian, met death by a truck accident, while working on the Mariposa canyon road. The truck brakes gave out, and truck went over the bank. Eli's friend, Charlie Thompson, a white youth was riding on back of the loaded truck. Eli rushed to Charlie and threw him off just as the truck went over, Eli must have jumped then, but his head struck a rock.

There was much "goings on" about the religious rites between Chief Neyo, and May Law, as to the outcome of Charlie Thompson. Chief Neyo was much wrought up about the white men taking Eli, but May Law faced Neyo, and said, "No, Neyo, white men did not take Eli, God took him and God knows why. Finally Neyo gave his word, "Eli say go, you go." Eli was given a fall Indian burial service; Mrs. Marguerite Wilson conducted the Indian burial services."

Neyo Figueroa was Chief of the Mariposa tribe. He was born in Bear Valley in 1850, and died in 1926.

BILLY WILSON (Sr.)

Born 1888 near El Portal, California. He was a stepson of Johnny Wilson. His wife was Lena Brown, a sister of Joe Rube. They had one son, Billy (Jr.) born in 1923.

Billy (Sr.) was a well-known guide for Kenney and Coffman, and later for the Yosemite Park Company. He was a colorful character, and guided many notables over the trails in Yosemite. He was an expert horseman, and able to meet any emergency in the mountains. He was a keen tracker; I recall one day when we lost our horses in the Tuolumne Canyon, Billy found and followed those tracks over smooth granite, finding our stock hiding up in the rocks on the canyon bench.

"Fire Water" got the best of some Indians. Sometime in the late 1920's trouble was brewing in the Rancheria of El Portal, and as usual fighting and drinking went on for sometime. The women and children tried to get away by crossing on a dangerous cable car that passed across the Merced River. While they were trying to escape some drunken Indian shook the cable, and upset the car, throwing out the three children and one woman. The children were drowned, the woman was pulled out of the water and revived.

Soon after this episode, Billy (Sr.) was found shot to death near the apple orchard in Indian Flat. A certain well-known Indian was questioned by the County Officers, but no proof of evidence was found that he committed this crime. So again, "Fire Water" was bad medicine. Billy, and the children were buried in the Indian cemetery near El Portal, California.

LUCY BROWN

Born, date unknown, perhaps in Yosemite. She was one of the last full-blooded Indians of the Yosemite tribe. Her husband was Bill Brown or Mono Brown as he was called. Lucy was a cousin of Maria Lebrado. She was in the Yosemite Valley when it was discovered in 1851. Lucy was the oldest of six generations of the Brown family, many of whom lived most of their lives in Yosemite. Both Lucy and Bill are buried in the Yosemite cemetery.

SUSIE LAURANCE

Susie was born, December 1869, near a stage station along the Merced River, Mariposa County. Her father Jim Laurance, a white man, came from Missouri. He worked in the gold mines, sawmills, road camps, and railroad around Mariposa County most of the time. They lived in Yosemite and Wawona part of the time.

Susie married Archie Leonard about 1891; they lived in Wawona much of their time while Archie was a Scout and Ranger for the Army Troops and for the National Park Service. There were fourteen children from this marriage; some died in infancy. At this writing there are four sons living, Henry in Madera, Archie in Angeles Camp, Tom in Ahwahnee, and John on the old homestead near Usona, and works in Yosemite for the National Park Service. There are two daughters living, Mae Esclante in Los Angeles, California, and Violet Cabezut in Atwater, California.

The old Usona homestead was taken up by Archie Leonard many years ago and remains in the family to this day.

Susie died in 1947, and was buried in the family cemetery, where eight members have been buried; they are Fanny, Illa, Lucinda, Jim, Frank, Jim Laurance, Susie, and Archie.

JOHN LEONARD

Born January 8, 1898, on the Chowchilla district, near Mariposa, California. His father was Archie Leonard. His mother was Susie. John worked for Yosemite National Park many years and lived most of his life in or near Yosemite. He had no family of his own. In winter he lives on the old homestead, near Usona, California.

JOE RUBE

Born 1891, near Bull Creek, Mariposa, California. His sister was Lena Brown Wilson. Joe was a Veteran of World War I. He worked and lived in Yosemite many years. He was an expert horseman, and packer. He packed for the Park Trail crews. He died, 1954, and was buried in Mariposa, California.

FREMONT JAMES

Born 1891, in Madera, California. Tribe Chuckchance; his father and mother unknown. He married Alice Tom; they had four children: Oscar, Frances, Gladys, and Norman. Fremont worked in the Park on labor crews for some years.

There was a second marriage to Eleanor Gibbs, and they had two daughters and two sons by this union. Some years later he met with a fatal accident when he was run over by a tractor trying to repair it.

ALICE TOM (JAMES) (WILSON)

Born 1899, near Mono Lake, a Piute. Daughter of Bridgeport Tom. Her mother was Louisa Tom. She came to Yosemite with her family many years, to gather acorns and trade with the Yosemiteites. Alice worked for some of the Yosemite families, doing housework and cooking. She was well liked by all the people in Yosemite. Alice married Fremont James, and they had four children.

Her second marriage was to Westley Wilson. They lived in Yosemite. Alice died June 10, 1959, and was buried in Mariposa, California.

HARRY JOHNSON

Born 1890, in Bear Valley, Mariposa County. His father was Henry Johnson, his mother Mary Ann. Harry married Sarah Tom in 1921. They had two daughters, Velda and Norma Jean. Lorraine was a stepdaughter. Velda lives near Midpines. Norma Jean lives in Malone, Nevada. They had two sons, Burleigh and Jay. Both were in the U.S. Army. Burleigh is now in Nevada. Jay works for the Park, on Insect Control crews.

Harry worked many years for the Park, on labor crews, road maintenance, and trail crews, and part time in the Park warehouse. He met with a fatal accident in 1958, when he fell in the Yosemite Creek and drowned. He was buried in the Mariposa cemetery.

Harry served in World War I, with the 20th Engineers in France.

JIM C. RUST

Born March 17, 1904, near Mariposa, California. A grandson of Maria Lebrado. His father was white. His mother was Grace Lebrado. Jim's first wife was Mary Walker, from Northfork, and his second wife was Pearl Lovine. They had one son, James who at last report was in the Navy. There were two daughters, Joan who married Ronald Wilson, Beverly, married Charles Hibpsham, they had two sons, and one daughter: Steven, Ray, and Roberta. Joan had two daughters and one son.

Jim's third wife was Veltha Jones. From reports there had been trouble in the family, and during an argument she committed suicide by shooting herself.

Jim lived and worked in Yosemite Valley many years. He worked for the National Park Service, and for road contractors in and out of Yosemite. He now makes his home near Bear Creek, near Mariposa, California.

FRED BEALE

Born, date not known, near Bear Creek, Mariposa County. He was a handsome halfbreed. His wife was Emma Oliver. They had five children. Fred lived and worked in Yosemite on labor crews, and was a guide in the Park for some time.

He met his death in a mine near El Portal. He was carrying dynamite caps in a box on his waist; it was thought he may have been smoking, and this accidentally set off the charge which blasted his abdomen. He lived several days after the accident.

EMMA OLIVER BEALE

Born April 11, 1883, near Mariposa, California. She is the daughter of Jack Oliver. Her first husband was Fred Beale, and



Kalapine

they had five children. Later she married Pete Hilliard about 1925. Date of her death not known.

Ranger John Wegner recalled an incident in 1914, when he assisted Fred Beale in recovering the body of their young son who fell off a plank bridge across Indian Creek. Water had to be diverted in Indian Creek to get the body out of a tangle of roots at the foot of a small waterfall.

A young daughter died of tuberculosis in Yosemite, about 1930. These two children and Fred were buried in the Indian Cemetery, near Bear Creek, California.

JACK WILSON

Born October 9, 1894, in Merced Falls, California. He went to the Sherman Indian School, in Riverside, California. He lived in Merced Falls and in Madera, California, the early part of his life. Jack lived and worked in Yosemite for some years. In 1942 he had an accident on the Four Mile trail, in Yosemite, when a rock rolled on him, and this may have been the beginning of his illness. He died January 13, 1944, from a heart attack.

His father was Frank Wilson. His mother was Marguerite Wilson.

LOUIS AUSTIN

Born 1895, near Bull Creek, Mariposa County. His father Was Austin, an old-time Indian. His mother was Emma, daughter of Captain Jim. He had one sister Ada Martinez, who died about eight years ago. He had one nephew, George Warne and two nieces, Mable Riddle and Alfretta Converse.

Louis worked in Yosemite many years and was a packer for the Park Service trail crews. He was an expert horseman and a number one hand. He now lives in Bagby, California, and works for the Schilling cattle ranch.

WESTLEY WILSON

Born 1900, in Merced Falls, California. Attended school in the Sherman Indian School. His father was Frank Wilson; his mother was Marguerite Wilson.

Westley lived and worked in Merced Falls during his early life in the woolen mills and flour mills. After moving to Yosemite he worked for the Park, and the Yosemite Park and Curry Company.

He married Alice James, and they lived in the Yosemite Indian Village. After Alice's death, he remained in the Indian Village, and at the present time lives near his sister Phoebe.

JOHNNY BROWN

Johnny was born about 1860, perhaps at Rancheria Flat near El Portal. He was married first to Sally Ann Dick. His second wife was Lena Brown, and they had four children - Chris, Virgil, Alves, and Hazel. Johnny was one of the last Indian burial ceremonies in Yosemite Valley which took place during his funeral. Chris Brown and Lizzie, last surviving Nutchu, performed the Indian rites at the burial 1934.

VIRGIL BROWN

Born August 18, 1898, in Yosemite. He was the son of Johnny Brown; his mother was Lena Brown. He lived in and around Yosemite and El Portal, also Bull Creek. His disposition was somewhat troublesome, and "fire water" did not improve it. He had a stroke about five years ago which crippled him, and he died from this condition.

CHRIS BROWN (CHIEF LEE MEE)

Born 1903, near El Portal, California. Son of Johnny Brown, mother Lena. As a boy he learned the dances and chants and tribal rituals. He was appointed "runner" or messenger for his tribe, he was called "Chief" by whites because he was chief of song and dance for his tribe. Tape recordings of his Songs and Chants are in the museum.

He worked for the Park Service, at the Museum, giving demonstrations of Indian dances. He had no "Chief" status with the Indians, though they all were admiring of him because he was able to fool the whites at the Museum. So much "material" was demanded of him that he gleefully made some of it up. He would pretend he knew no English, and sometimes Phoebe would "translate" for him. But one day she got fed up and said, "Ask him - he speaks white man's language," and he was very put out with her, for giving him away. Phoebe admired and was fond of him, and lost a good friend when he died.

Lee mee's Indian name translated meant "ripple on the water"; this was given to him by Calpene, a medicine woman of the Miwok tribe. His name Chris was bestowed by Chris Jorgensen, famed Yosemite artist.

Chris was a cousin of Phoebe Hogan, as his grandmother and Phoebe's mother were sisters. He lived most of his life in Yosemite and Mariposa. He died, November 14, 1956, and was buried in Mariposa, California.

ALVIS BROWN

Born March 12, 1907, in El Portal, California. Son of Johnny Brown. He had no family of his own. Worked for Yosemite National Park as a packer for some years. In later years



Indian Field Days, 1920

he made his home in Mariposa, California. There is a news report of his death in Stockton, California, by some unknown assailant who stabbed him. He was buried in Mariposa, November 11, 1964.

HENRY B. HOGAN

Born September 22, 1899, near Bear Valley, Mariposa County. His father was Dave Hogan, half white, his mother was Emma Priest, half white, of Mariposa.

His wife Hazel, who was raised by John and Lucy Telles, died in 1944. They had a son and two daughters. Delbert, the son, died in 1944. Helen married a man by the name of Coats, and they had three children, Jack, Alveta, and Lisa. Henry worked for the Yosemite National Park sanitation crew for many years. They own a home near Whispering Pines, Mariposa County. His wife Hazel was born 1909, near Mono Lake, her last name unknown. John and Lucy Telles gave her their name. In 1944 she met a tragic death by some unknown assailants near San Francisco. Her body was severely battered and thrown out in the bushes in a lonely spot. No reason was found for their heinous crime.

CLARENCE HOGAN

Born January 2, 1907, near Bear Valley, Mariposa County. He was the son of Dave Hogan, half white, his mother was Emma Priest, of Midpines. He married Phoebe Wilson Lovine, in 1931. They lived in Yosemite Indian Village. Clarence, worked for the Park, on road and trail crews.

He was unfortunate and became addicted to liquor, and under its influence he was quarrelsome. In one of these spells he fought with his family and wife, doing bodily injury to his wife. He was cited before the U.S. Commissioner and given a suspended sentence if he would give up "fire water" and cause no more trouble. He left the Park after this trouble and made his home in Mariposa.

He had a daughter from an early marriage, her name is Mrs. Margaret Acequero, and she now has a large family and lives near Gabbs, Nevada.

Clarence died, July 22, 1965, and was buried in the Hern Cemetery, near Mariposa, California.

ROY HOGAN

Born October 2, 1904, near Mariposa, California. A son of Dave Hogan. He married Louise Valenzuela, and they had one daughter who now lives in Santa Clara.

Roy worked in Yosemite for the road maintenance and lived in the Indian Village some time. He was killed when his car went out of control and turned over the grade near Mariposa, some twenty years ago.

HELEN HOGAN

Born May 31, 1927, in Yosemite Valley. Her father was Henry B., and her mother Hazel. She married Jack Coats of Idaho. Their home is in Mariposa. They have three children: Jack, Alveta, and Lisa. Helen was employed at the Yosemite Hospital as a nurses aid.

STANLEY CASTRO

Born 1901. in Mariposa, California. His father Tiburcio Fortunado Castro, was a barber and had a shop in Mariposa many years. He came to Mariposa with the influx of miners in the early gold rush days.

Stanley first worked for the Yosemite National Park in 1917, on the Pole Line between El Portal and Yosemite Valley. Then for a few years he was employed by the Yosemite Park Company, servicing equipment in the garage. In, 19291 he started work for the National Park Road Maintenance and later became foreman-in-charge at Wawona.

He married Agnes Tom, in 1921, and they had three children: Charlie, Patsy, and Roberta. They made their home in the Indian Village and Wawona.

Patsy, born 1932, lives in Mariposa, California. Roberta, born 1941, is a Registered Nurse, graduated from the Kaiser School, 1963. Charlie, born in Yosemite, works in Yosemite National Park Service Blister Rust and Insect Control work in the Park.

Stanley told about his job working for the State Road Department near Mono Lake, in 1921, while building the new grade between Mono Lake and Bridgeport. Mules and horses were used on this job. Agnes, his wife, cooked for sixty men. It was a rough job, with a minimum of conveniences.

Castro and Agnes retired December 1965, and moved to Mariposa, California.

AGNES TOM (CASTRO)

Born July 4, 1899, in Bodie, California. A Piute. Her father was Bridgeport Tom, her mother was Leanna.

Agnes lived with her family near Mono Lake most of her young life, except in summer, when the family came over the mountains to Yosemite to gather acorns and trade with the Yosemite. She married Stanley Castro, in 1921. They had three



Home of "Captain Dick" (Ruando Dick), Father of Sally Ann

children, as mentioned before. Agnes worked for the Yosemite ark and Curry Company many years, at the Lodge and at Wawona Hotel. In the Valley she worked for some of the local families. She was well liked by everyone. They raised and educated their family in the best manner.

Her mother Leanna is very old, could be 100 or more, and lives near Coleville, California. Her grandmother was Susie Sam, her grandfather on her mother's side was Captain Sam. There is a tape recording on Susie Sam in the Yosemite Museum.

Agnes is now the oldest of the Piutes who came to Yosemite many year ago. She is well known and respected by all the old-timers.

LLOYD PARKER

Born 1902, near Mono Lake. A Piute. His father was Jack Parker, his mother Lucy Tom. His wife was Virginia Murphy, of Mono Lake. They had three sons. Ralph lives and works in Yosemite for the Road Department. Clarence died about three years ago in an automobile accident. Kenneth lives in Bootjack; near Mariposa; his wife is Dorothy Bolton and they have three children.

Lloyd has lived and worked in Yosemite Valley most of his life, on road and trail crews, and at this date he is making his home in the Indian Village.

ALVIN RHOAN

Born May 25, 1906, near Bull Creek, Mariposa County. He belonged to the Mariposa tribe. He is the grandson of Maria Lebrado. His father was George Rhoan, his mother was Candelaria. Alvin attended school at Greenville Indian School, in Plumas County, and the Sherman Indian School in Riverside, California.

He married Amy Harrison of Mono Lake, a Piute, in 1930. hey had four children. Joe is in the U. S. Air Corps. Patrick is in the Air Transport Service U.S. Army. George lives in Fresno, California. Beatress married to Jim Phillips.

His wife, Amy Harrison, was born January 29, 1910, near Mono Lake; her mother was Ida Tom.

Alvin has lived and worked most of his life in Yosemite Park, in the road department and now is Operator General. They live in Wawona. Amy worked at the Wawona Hotel. Alvin retired in 1965, now making their home near Mariposa.

NELSON OLIVER

Born 1906, in Mariposa, California, a member of the Mariposa tribe. His father was Jack Oliver, half white. His mother as Ella Johnson, half white. His wife was Hazel Brown. They had five children: Mary Jane, Margaret, Barbara, Jack, and Robert. Two of these, Mary Jane and Margaret met a tragic death; they were drowned in the Merced River near El Portal while trying to cross in the cable car, while a family fight was going on in the Rancheria. The children were thrown out of the car into the rushing water of the Merced River.

Some years later Hazel met with an untimely death. She was beaten up by some unknown men, and died from the injuries, reason of the crime was unknown.

Nelson worked in Yosemite a number of years on labor crews, wood cutting, and road maintenance, now making his home in Mariposa, California.

FRAZIER BEALE

Born November 8, 1903, near El Portal, California. He was the son of Fred and Emma Beale. His wife is Lila Oliver; they had two daughters, Freda and Alilene.

Frazier worked and lived in Yosemite for a number of years on the labor and carpenter crews. Later moved near Oakland, California, where he was employed by the Southern Pacific Railroad, as a machinist.

EUGENE BEALE

Born November 16, 1902, near El Portal, California. Son of Fred and Emma Beale. He was in World War II, contracted T. B., was in Walla Walla, Washington, hospital for awhile, was discharged. His whereabouts not known at this time. He had no family of his own.

LAURENCE BEALE

Born January 14, 1908, near El Portal, California, the son of Fred and Emma Beale. His wife was Irene Harrison. They now live near Oakland, where he operated an auto wrecking yard. In his early years he worked in Yosemite National Park, on trail and road crews.

HAZEL BEALE

Born December 12, 1909, near El Portal, California. The daughter of Fred and Emma Beale. She married George Warren. She met death by choking on a piece of meat. They lived in Los Angeles for some time. George worked for the Park Service for a number of years and lived in the Indian Village.

ROSIE BEALE

Born September 16, 1917, near El Portal, California. The daughter of Fred and Emma. She married a man by the name of Soldado. They had three or four children. They live in El Monte, California.

NICHOLAS EDWARD BROCHINI (SR.)

Born 1906, in Madera, California. Italian. Worked in the lumber mill, was a planer and sawyer. His wife was Pearl Lovine daughter of Phoebe. They had four children: Laurence, Edward, John, and Evelyn. He died of cancer of the lung, February 14, 1933, and was buried in the Catholic cemetery in Madera, California.

NICHOLAS EDWARD BROCHINI (JR.)

Born December 4, 1924, in Madera, California. His father was Nicholas (Sr.), his mother was Pearl Lovine. He married Florence Watson, from Idaho. They had five children: Linda, Robert, John, Daniel, and Debra.

Nicholas served in the Army during the World War II. He has worked for Yosemite National Park on light and heavy duty trucks. They lived in the Indian Village some years. Now Disposal Plant operator at El Portal. Their home is in Midpines, California.

LAURANCE BROCHINI

Born February 19, 1927, in Madera, California. Father was Nicholas (Sr.); his mother, Pearl Lovine. He attended school in Madera, Phoenix Indian School in Arizona, and at Northfork, California. He married Ann Hall, who worked in the National Park office. They live in Yosemite Valley.

Laurance has worked up in the National Park Service and is doing a fine job, in the Road Maintenance Department.

JOHN BROCHINI

Born November 29, 1930, in Madera, California. Father was Nicholas, his mother, Pearl Lovine. He married Patsy Castro. They have three children: Tony, Marino, and John (Jr.). They live and own a home near Mariposa. He has worked on road contract work near Sierra City, California, for some time.

EVELYN HIBSMAN

Born May 19, 1929, in Madera, California. Her father was Nicholas Brochini; her mother was Pearl Lovine Brochini. She is a granddaughter of Phoebe. Separated from her husband, Evelyn has been working for the Yosemite Park and Curry Company, in the Housekeeping Camp, and lives with her grandmother part time. She is well liked by her supervisor and is a good steady worker. She has one son, Mike Brochini, 17 years old. One daughter, Yvone Coleman, age 14.

LEE LEMASTER (SR.)

Born near Blue Mound, Kansas, date unknown. His father was white. He married Emma Priest Hogan, of the Mariposa tribe. They had one son, Richard. Lee worked for Yosemite National Park on road maintenance for some time, in the early 1930's. He died, January 17, 1951, and was buried in the Hern Cemetery, near Midpines, California.

RICHARD LEMASTER

Born 1924. His father was Lee Lemaster. His mother was Emma Priest. He married Velda Johnson. They lived in Yosemite. They had three children: Donald, Gale, and Bonnie. Richard worked for the Park on labor crews for some years. He was killed in an auto accident near Oakhurst, California, April 1, 1951.

WILSON CHAPMAN

Born near Usona, in Mariposa County, date unknown. White. He married Lorraine Johnson, a granddaughter of Bridgeport Tom, and they had one daughter Gloria and one son Billie. Wilson worked in Yosemite on road maintenance and wood cutting for some time. It was reported some years ago he had gone to Saudi Arabia.

PAUL CRAMER (JR.) (WHITE)

Paul lived and worked in Yosemite during his early years, on road maintenance. He married Lorraine Chapman; they had no children. A few years ago he transfer[r]ed to Sequoia National Park, on road maintenance.

OSCAR JAMES

Born May 19, 1916, near Mono Lake, California. His father was Fremont James; his mother Alice (Tom) James. He attended school in Yosemite. He married Veltha Jones, from Awaik, Nevada. They had one son George who was killed in an auto accident. Oscar lived and worked in Yosemite Park many years on labor crews.

FRANCES JAMES

Born June 6, 1918. The daughter of Fremont and Alice James. She died of T. B. in an Arizona hospital some years ago. It was reported a few kind local Yosemite women gathered enough money to send Alice to Arizona to see Frances, who turned over, looked at her mother, said, "I knew you'd come," and died.

NORMAN JAMES

Born September 2, 1923, in Yosemite the son of Fremont and Alice James. He attended the-local school, and lived all his life here. He has been working for the Park Service on road maintenance, heavy-duty operator. They had six sons. His wife Pauline has been working for the Yosemite Park and Curry Company, part time during the summer seasons.

GLADYS JAMES

Born, date unknown, near Mono Lake, the daughter of Fremont and Alice James. She died in Mono County some years ago.

RALPH L. PARKER

Born March 2, 1930, in Yosemite Valley, the son of Lloyd and Virginia Parker. He attended Yosemite school and Stewart Indian School, in Stewart, Nevada.

Ralph married Julia Domingues, May 16, 1948, in El Portal, California, making their home in the Yosemite Indian Village. He had two daughters and two sons.

Ralph is employed by the Yosemite National Park Road Maintenance heavy equipment operator.

Ralph's grandmother was Lucy Telles, grandfather Jack Parker, Piute. His great grandmother, Louisa Tom, a Yosemite or Miwok. Great grandfather was Bridgeport Tom. His great-great grandmother was Susie Sam a Yosemite or Miwok. His great-great grandfather was Captain Sam, Piute.

JULIA (DOMINGUES) PARKER

Born March 8, 1929, in Graton, California. She came to Yosemite in 1948. Her father was Mexican; her mother a full-blooded Pomo Indian.

Julia went to school seven years in public school and five years to the Carson Indian School in Stewart, Nevada.

She married Ralph L. Parker, a Yosemite Indian, May 16, 1948, in El Portal, California. They have two daughters and two sons. Their names are: Virginia, Lucy, Louis, and Allan.

Julia is continuing the custom of making Indian baskets and gives demonstrations to the park visitors in the museum garden each day in the summer. This is sponsored by the Yosemite Naturalist Division. This craft is almost a lost art among the present day Indians. She demonstrates the technique of weaving coiled baskets, and also of preparing acorn meal and cakes. Julia's work has proven very popular with the Yosemite visitors, and has aided greatly in telling the story of the Yosemite Indians. In 1965, Julia was employed by the Yosemite Park and Curry Company, to manage the Pohono Shop, which specializes in handling Indian items.

Julia's father was Frank Ralph Domingues who died in 1933 and was buried in Santa Rosa, California. Her mother, Lily Pete Domingues, died in 1934, and was buried in Santa Rosa. She had two brothers, Frank and William, and two sisters, Mary Lou and Madeline.

In a recent news item dated March 1966, Byron Nishkian, formerly a Yosemite Winter Club president, now USSA president, recently attended the F I S Nordic Championships in Oslo. He took as a gift to the Norwegian Ski Association a magnificent Indian basket woven by Julia Parker. Mrs. Parker devoted some 350 hours to the basket's creation, weaving it from native grasses. Mrs. Parker refused any reimbursement and was pleased that she could contribute a part of our country's heritage to our friends in Norway.

NOTE:

These biographical sketches are not complete because countless numbers of Indian blood have died or left the Yosemite Region since I first joined the Yosemite Ranger service in 1921. However, they may be of value to future historians, and should be preserved.

John W. Bingaman
District Park Ranger (Retired)
Yosemite National Park, California



Yosemite Indians

CHAPTER IV

INDIAN SLAVE TRAFFIC AND DISEASES

On October 2, 1854, the "Alta California" published an article in which it was stated that abducting Indian children had become quite a common practice. Many children belonging to some of the Indian tribes in the northern part of the State were stolen, and were taken to the southern part of the State, and there sold.

On May 23, 1857, the Butte County Record noted the presence in Chico of a Mexican, "who has been in the habit of stealing Indian children and selling them to Mexican rancheros in southern California."

Accounts from Petaluma Journal, and Marysville Appeal, of December 6, 1861, contained the following. "It is from these mountain tribes that white settlers draw their supplies of kidnapped children, educated as servants, and women for purposes of labor, and of lust. It is notorious that there are parties in the northern counties of this state, whose sole occupation has been to steal young children, and squaws from the poor Diggers, who inhabit the mountains, and disposed of them at handsome prices to the settlers, who being in the majority of cases unmarried but good at housekeeping, willingly pay fifty or sixty dollars for young Digger to cook and wait upon them, or a hundred dollars or a likely young girl."

Kidnaping went on as late as 1861 and 1864. There were reports of up to two hundred and fifty kidnapings in 1862. The practice began about 1852, and continued at least till 1867. It was during these fifteen years, perhaps between three and four thousand children were stolen. This estimate would not include squaws taken for concubinage or adults for field labor.

The effect on the Indians of this peculiarly Yankee kidnaping industry was exasperating to the highest degree. It was not only an irritant which drove some of them to physical and violent retaliation; it intensified and prolonged their aversion to the type of labor in which the kidnaped persons were employed.

The most dominant diseases were syphilis, tuberculosis, and dysenteries. Most Indian deaths were due to these.

Syphilis appeared in upper California certainly within the first decade of settlement. The conventional story attributed its introduction to the de Anza expedition to Los Angeles in 1777. Thus Miguel and Zalvidea state that this putrid and contagious disease had its beginning with the time Don Juan Bautista de Anza stopped at the Mission San Gabriel with his expedition.

The very first expeditions were characterized by disorderly conduct with the Indian women on the part of the soldiers.

Epidemics were reported early in 1800 of pneumonia, diphtheria, measles, consumption, dysentery, and diarrhoea. Syphilis was reported in 1807. Smallpox was reported in 1833.

Sweeping epidemics of 1830 - 1840, and all sorts of diseases became established among the central California tribes. Losses from these epidemics from 1838 to 1848 may be up to 5,000 deaths. These occurred in the six tribes, Pomo, Wappo, Wintun, Maidu, Miwok, and Yokuts. Neglecting entirely possible mortality, even from syphilis, prior to 1830, it has been estimated that 4,500 perished in the 1833 pandemic, 2,000 in the smallpox scourge of 1837, and 5,000 from endemic illness and secondary epidemics up to 1848. This gives a total of 11,500. The estimated aboriginal population of the six tribes would be about 58,900.

So white man's diseases and habits took untold count of these six Indian Tribes, and surely left a black mark in the annals of the history of our State.



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