

RUSSIAN RIVER RECORDER

Lucy Smith, held by her Uncle, Jim Shakley

Circa 1906 Healdsburg



photo courtesy of The Langhart Museum

published by

THE HEALDSBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P.O. BOX 952, Healdsburg, CA 95448
ISSUE 26
Winter 1983

Table of Contents

excerpt from:

The Historical Development of the
Russian River Valley 1579-1875

Ruby Alta Ferguson pg. 1

"The American (Indians) of Upper
California" (1834)

F. Wrangel pg. 9

Historical Society Notes pg. 13

Museum News pg. 14

EDITORIAL

This long-awaited issue of the "Recorder" features an excerpt from an exceptional master's thesis by Ruby Alta Ferguson, written in 1925 while she was studying at the University of California at Berkeley. One of the most thorough histories ever written on the Russian River Valley, we hope to publish this work in its entirety in the near future. Donations to the Historical Society towards this end would be appreciated.

Our second feature, by F. Wrangel, is an account written by a man who journeyed up the Russian River from Jenner in 1834. It offers a glimpse of Eden-like Sonoma County before the disruption of early settlement.

FINAL NOTICE!

Unless a core of volunteers comes forth the "Russian River Recorder" will henceforth come out only once or twice each year. So if you are interested in seeing the "Recorder" more often, now is the time to come forth and commit yourself. Call Hannah at 433-4717 if you are interested in working on this project.

Editor.....Hannah Clayborn
lay-out.....Laurie Wilson

The Historical Development of the Russian River Valley

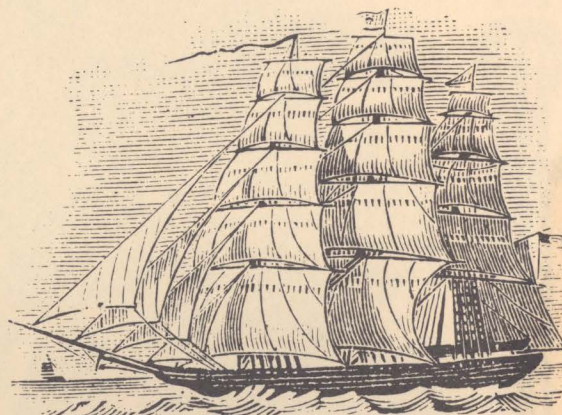
By Ruby Alta Ferguson

THESIS A. B. 1925



The Preparatory Period,

1579-1820



EARLY COASTAL EXPLORERS

The valley in 1579.--Until the opening of the nineteenth century, the heavy growth of oat grass in the open lands of the Russian River Valley bent only under the soft tread of Indian mocassin and the sharp, idle step of grazing animals. Certain well-defined trails appeared here and there, breaking the even height of the grass, marking the way to the most frequented locales of aborigine and animal. Most worn of these was one which followed the willows along the south bank of the river to its mouth near Bodega, where quantities of raw wampum (clam shells), an abundance of sea food, and an opportunity for idle or profitable chatter with their coast relatives drew constant travelers from among the valley.

A period of coastal explorations.-- In the summer of 1579, the uneventful irregularity of these visits was rudely upset by the swiftly relayed tidings of an unknown people and a ship on the sea coast. Quickened by curiosity, as many as were able of the interior Indians moved in continuous and eager procession along the narrow river trail, and from the safety of the environing woods, looked upon the newcomers on the beach. In the distance, safely riding at anchor, lay the Golden Hind, and close to hand their coastal friends were thronging the beach about the ship's crew and its commander. Reassured by the friendly scene before them, the valley Indians silently and in twos and threes drifted from the shadowy concealment of the trees to the outskirts of the shifting throng about Drake and his companions. In the course of the following days, their fear had fled before the force of their curiosity and the generosity of the white sailors. The crowd of loiterers on the beach constantly increased. From Drake's own account, it appears that hundreds of Indians continually came and went, bringing with them always gifts; among these, the peculiar boat-shaped baskets made only by the squaws of the Russian River and adjacent villages.

Cermeno's disaster.--In the two hundred years or more that followed, the curiosity of the Indians was constantly whetted by the recurring appearance of voyagers on the coast. Seventeen years after Drake's visit, Sebastian Cermeno, commanding the San Agustin, cast anchor somewhere near Point Reyes. Within a few days after his landing his expedition came to grief. His ship dragged its moorings, grounded upon a reef, and was wrecked. Cermeno's projected stay of a few days lengthened into a sojourn of several weeks among the Indians while the survivors of the San Agustin prepared the ship's launch for a return journey to Mexico. During the progress of these preparations, the Spanish sailors lived upon native food which they gathered or received as gifts from the friendly Indians. A supply of the least perishable of these foodstuffs, made up for the most part of acorns, madrona berries, thistle buds, herbs, and dried venison, stored away in their small craft, was all that kept them from starvation on the hazardous return home.

Bolano's voyage.--Eight years later, Francisco de Bolanos, a survivor of Cermeno's voyage, now with Vizcaino and chief pilot of the Capitana, dropped anchor for a day below Point Reyes, while he and his men scanned the rocks and surrounding shore line hopefully but futilely for some trace of the cargo of silks and beeswax that had gone down with the San Agustin. Although they did not go ashore and Bolanos makes no mention of the inhabitants it is unlikely that the big ship escaped notice and interested comment by one or more of the fishing or clamming parties that were constantly busy along the coast.

The visit of Bodega.--It remained for Bodega in 1775 to renew Spanish associations with the people of the northern coast and with the interior Indians whom the news of his presence speedily drew again to the sea beach. Like his predecessors, he found the Indians disposed to be friendly, and especially eager to barter with him their catches of furs for the gleaming and gaily tasseled Spanish bugles displayed by his traders.

Bodega's voyage was the final episode in this series of early visits to the coast line in the vicinity of the Russian River. His account ended the early recorded interest in the north bay region until the beginning of the nineteenth century when the colonization ambitions of an unexpected rival threatened for a time to dominate Spanish influence in the region north of San Francisco Bay.

RUSSIAN INTEREST IN CALIFORNIA

Russian interest in California.--In 1805, Nikolai Rezanoff, newly made Chamberlain of Alaska and official of the Russian-America Fur Company, arrived at Sitka to assume his duties. He found the colonists complaining greatly of the lack of those foodstuffs, such as grain, flour, beans and other products which were raised in abundance on the California coast, but which the Russians were unable to grow in the more rigorous climate of the north. Resolved to secure these necessities for his half-destitute employees, Rezanoff loaded the Juno with linen, canvas, cotton articles, needles, boots, cross-cut saws, axes, and other manufactured articles which he thought might be needed in the Spanish settlements, and embarked for San Francisco. He arrived at the Presidio in May, 1806, and after extended arguments

and negotiations, which included a love affair and betrothal to the daughter of the commandante, the young Russian returned to Alaska with a cargo of grain, flour, and wool and a fund of enthusiastic information concerning the climate and attractiveness of the California coast.

Reports of Yankee agents.--Repeated talk of the accuracy of his reports grew with every arrival in the ports of the far north of those doughty Yankee sea captains who were under contract to hunt sea-otter for the Russian-America Company. The hiring of such sailing masters was a regular and profitable policy of the company. Among those hired and sent out in the years 1806 and 1807 were Captain Jonathan Winship of the O'Cain, and a Captain Campbell. The latter, accompanied by twelve Aleut bidarkas, spent a season on the coast and returned to Alaska in August of 1807 with 1,230 otter skins which were worth about eighty dollars apiece. The same year Captain Winship set out with fifty Aleut hunters, spent the winter on the Farallones, made a profitable haul, and turned homeward for Alaska before the first of May. Although these Yankee adventurers were themselves interested primarily in the sea and the wealth to be acquired from it, each contact of theirs with the California coast line and the interior made in the course of search for water, food, or fuel, brought to the marvelling ears of other venturesome spirits more detailed knowledge of the temperament of the inhabitants and the desirability of the land.

Preliminary explorations.--The first move to settle the land for the value of the soil itself came from those forward-looking officials most actively concerned with the internal needs of the company, who saw such a venture in the light of an advantage and aid to their southern fur trading activities. The favorable takes, the accounts of the coast brought back by their sea captains, the increasing need of foodstuffs and for bases of operations further south caused the Russian-American Company in 1808 to send out, as a feeler for settlement, an expedition under their agent, Alexander Kuskoff. His instructions were brief. He was to become better acquainted with definite localities suitable for settle-

ment in the southern waters. The Kadiak sailed from Sitka on October 21 of that year. After a fruitless attempt to enter Grey's Harbor in the face of conflicting winds, the expedition visited Trinidad and then sailed for Bodega. They arrived in that locality December 15. The next eight months were spent in hunting otter and following the instructions for the voyage. During this time, five of the crew became dissatisfied and deserted the camp. The remaining men re-embarked August 18, 1809, with a cargo of 2000 otter skins.

The settlement established.--In November of 1811, a second official party set out from the northern base with the definite determination to settle somewhere on the shores of New Albion. This group was made up of ninety-five Russians and the crews of forty Aleut bidarkas. Kuskoff's favorable report on the north bay coast line guided the location of this proposed permanent venture to the vicinity of the Russian River. After navigating the channel of this stream for about fifty versts (approximately twenty-five miles), without coming upon a suitable site, they returned to the coast where two establishments were set up; one at a place which they had named Fort Ross, sixteen miles above the mouth of the Russian River and, according to their observations, in latitude 38° 33' and longitude 123° 15'. This became the citadel and permanent center of the colony. The second group of buildings was erected at Bodega for the purpose of utilizing to the fullest advantage the exceptionally fertile soil in that vicinity.

The convenience of both the Fort and Bodega to the river is made clear in this description of the situation by a contemporary writer:

"About half way between the Fort and little Bodega the Slavianka (Russian River) empties, which is called Shahakai by the natives. It springs from a large lake, but its mouth is obstructed by a bar, the sand washing down the river in such quantity as to form a temporary barrier between the current of the river and the tide of the ocean."

It is perhaps significant to note that the lands taken up by the Russian establishments encompassed the mouth of the river, in which their interest had not ended by their failure to settle upon its banks or to successfully navigate its mouth. This

photo
courtesy of
David Peri

POMO DANCE AT UPPER LAKE



situation was strategic; it became a Russian highway.

The fort at Ross was placed on a bluff about one hundred and ten feet above the surface of the sea. It was protected by ten cannon and surrounded by a stockade ten feet high. Two bastions of two stories each were built at opposite corners of the stockade. At the two remaining corners of the quadrangle were erected the chapel and the home of the commander. On the gentle slope between these buildings and the edge of the sea cliff were placed the huts of the Aleuts, and in later years, the brush homes of those of the native Indians who found it convenient or profitable to locate nearer the white settlers.

Purpose of the southern colonies.--The object of the Russian establishment was twofold: first, to supply a base for southern sea-otter hunting expeditions; and second, to raise for the northern colonies those vegetables and grains the growing of which their more rigorous climate would not permit. The soil about the fort was found to be satisfactory for the growing of small vegetables, such as cabbage, lettuce, beets, radishes, turnips, garlic, carrots, pumpkins, and potatoes,

all of which were planted in abundance. But grain, the food most needed by the colonies, did not do well in the moist coastal climate, and it became necessary to seek a more favorable location for their wheat fields. This agricultural motive, leading as it did, to exploration of the interior for land more tillable than that of the adjacent coast line, was directly responsible for the first definite knowledge of the Russian River Valley, and indirectly, through the furore it stirred in Spanish circles, a cause for the advancing of Spanish settlement of the valley by a decade or more.

Inland Explorations.--The Russian settlers were constant and indefatigable explorers. Golovin says that a short time after they had settled in New Albion, they had discovered rivers, mountains, and bays which were totally unknown to the Spaniards. He mentions their ascent for fifty versts of a river northeast of San Francisco Bay, near the source of which they came upon a high burning volcano, the "existence of which the Spanish never dreamed." It is reasonable to believe that if this trip were taken in fact at all, that the river explored was the Russian River, and that the volcano mentioned

was the canon of fumaroles which lies high upon the eastern slope of Geyser Peak, which place may be reached easily enough by ascending the Russian River to its confluence with Sulfur Creek, thence up the latter to the canon of the geysers.

THE VALLEY INDIANS

Indian allies.--These exploring expeditions were seldom molested by the valley Indians who found the fort a convenient trading post at which to exchange pelts for tobacco, liquor, trinkets, and other luxuries. The Aleuts and the Russians sought and valued Indian friendship. A few years after the coming of the north-erners, the settlement about Ross was dotted with the huts of the natives. Marriage of Aleuts and Russians to Indian woman became the custom. The settlers grew well acquainted with Indian habits and living, for frequently when exploring parties were overtaken by darkness while far from the fort, they accepted hospitality and a lodging overnight in the Indian villages.

These villages lay scattered wherever food was abundant along the coast and on the banks of the Russian River. The most thickly settled area was the locality extending north from the juncture with Mark West Creek along the Russian River to Healdsburg. The Russians found these Indians of the inland villages to be possessed of the same characteristics and modes of living as those on the coast, for linguistic affinity and the frequent visits of the inland villagers to the coast, together with the regular trips of the coast Indians to the vicinity of the Geysers for minerals and pigment, had made the two peoples well acquainted.

Linguistic distinctions among the valley Indians.--The valley of the Russian River had early afforded a home to the Indians of two linguistic divisions: one, the Pomo, who held their area by the right of long possession; and the other, the Wappo, who had acquired a small portion of the valley through conquest. The people using the Southern Pomo dialect inhabited all of Dry Creek Valley and most of the Russian River Valley from Dutch Bill Creek to Preston, with the exception of a ten-mile area reaching from a point on the river about three miles above Geyserville and extending southwestward in an arc-like sweep to

the river again just behind Fitch mountain at its confluence with Elk Creek. This region and that immediately to the east and southeast was held by the Wappo, a dialectic division of the larger linguistic group known in later years as the Yuki.

Native homes and architecture.--In the summer time, the valley people usually built brush huts along the course of some stream on the banks of the river. In winter these were exchanged for dwellings of a more permanent nature. The closely set trunks of sapling trees made the walls, and a grass thatch covered the roof. As their needs varied, or as superstition and the scarcity of food demanded, they abandoned the huts in which they were living and located a new village upon a more favorable site, usually not far away.

The two important buildings of a village were the temescal and the dance house. The former was always built on the banks of a stream. It was the center for gambling games and for a few of the dances. A circular hole dug in the ground formed the base. The roof was a conical structure built of logs and thickly covered with earth. A hole at the side provided an entrance, and an opening in the center of the roof directly over the fireplace let out the smoke. The braves crawled through the door and lay about, or squatted and gambled until they could no longer endure the heat. Thereupon, they rushed out and plunged into the nearby stream. General use of the sweat house was limited to the men, although women were allowed to sit along the sides during gambling games.

Tribal organization.--Abandonment of villages, festal activities, and other important matters of community welfare were determined upon by the Pomos at a council of their captains, one of whom was the nominal head of each family, or dialectic group. These captains, with the big captain elected by them from among their number, formed the advisory body of the village. Each of these councils carried on the affairs of its community independently, although mutual interests sometimes brought about a temporary alliance.

Ceremonial activities.--The dance house sheltered village ceremonial activities. These ceremonies began shortly after sunset and lasted four days or some multiple of four. String and stick invitations



OLD POMO
SEMI-SUB-
TERRANEAN
DANCE
HOUSE

photo
courtesy
of
David Peri

conveyed the news of an intended event to neighboring communities. The ceremony proper was in five parts; an introductory procedure, a series of dances followed by speeches on religion or matters of public interest, and a final purification rite followed by a feast. The best known Pomo ceremony was the ghost dance which, according to tradition, was instituted as an atonement for an offense to the dead. These dance rituals were often the means for identifying some individual member of the village with the group. During the guksu ceremony, Pomo children were made members of the village by a process known as scarification. The important ritual of the fall months was an elaborate acorn harvest ceremonial.

Pomo and Wappo dress.--On these occasions, participants of both sexes dressed in the particular costume befitting the parts, more or less ornately as the situation demanded. The squaws, who were seldom in the dances, made their appearance at the festivities laden with all the bracelets, anklets, wristlets, belts, and headbands of wampum and feathers that their individual financial status permitted. If it so happened that kinsman or husband were

unlucky in the gambling following the ceremony, their exodus was less burdened with the weight of primitive finery and wealth.

Supplementing these articles of adornment, the Indian women wore loose skirts of buckskin, which covered the breasts and overlapped, being pinned together on the side. This skirt was always elaborately flecked with bits of abalone shell, feathers, or wampum. In winter over it was worn, as a protection from the weather and the cold, an outer garment of shredded tule, redwood bark, or willow, according to the locality. If the day were cold, the softly tanned skin of an animal, thrown over the shoulders, completed the attire. Moccasins were worn whenever the weather or the occasion required their use.

The Russians were interested observers of the habits of their native neighbors. A visitor to Fort Ross describes the Indians as wearing no clothing at all, except a bandage around the loins; only in the winter when it is cold, they wrap around them the skin of some animal, deer, or wolf. Their ornaments consist in head dresses made of feathers, and wound with grass or flowers. Spears and bows are their arms. They do not cultivate the soil to gain their subsistence, but make use of the voluntary

gifts of nature and are not very fastidious in the selection of their food. They eat without the least hesitation the flesh of all animals which fall into their hands, all kinds of fish and shellfish, and even reptiles, with the exception of poisonous snakes. Their principal vegetable food consists of oak nuts which they gather for the winter and the grain of the wild rye which grows here in great abundance.

Neighborhood feuds.--Food rights and the gathering of food was one of the surest, and most frequent causes for warfare between the peoples of neighboring villages. Each community possessed exclusive hunting, fishing, and food-gathering rights in the lands adjacent to the village, these being well understood, and usually respected by the peoples of other rancherias. The presence of the Wappo Indians in the Russian River Valley is directly attributable to a feud of this sort. Formerly the Western Wappo held only one village, Pipoholma, just east of the present town of Geyserville on the Russian River. The Pomo held the remainder of the valley basin. The inhabitants of Pipoholma, who called themselves Micewal gathered acorns on their own side of the creek, stacked the baskets, left them for the night and went home. During the night the acorns disappeared. Suspicion fell upon the people of Ossokowi, the nearest Pomo village. The Micewal waited until dark and then made a quiet raid upon the thieves. The next morning, during the cremation of these victims, the attack was repeated. The people of Ossokowi scattered and the town was burned. While the victorious Micewal were disposing of the dead, the vanquished, from a point far down the river, sent back word that they wished to end the feud. A meeting was held and gifts were exchanged between the two captains. The Ossokowi and the Pomo of nearby villages, who had also fled their homes, were then at liberty to return. Whether from fear or by choice they refused to do so is not known, but they sent word to the effect that the Wappo were welcome to occupy their former villages, as they had decided to locate elsewhere. Two of the villages, Cimela and Kotishomota, were resettled by the Wappo. The others remained uninhabited.

Indian wealth.--During these village feuds, their relations with the Russians on the coast were undisturbed. In bartering at the fort, the Indians commonly used as a medium of exchange, pelts from the bodies of the wild animals which they had trapped. They frequently offered strings of their native money, which though much prized among themselves, was refused in trade at the post. Of their various money pieces, the most common and the easiest to make was wampum, which the Pomos called ka-yah. This they chipped out from bits of clam shells which were first carefully rounded, perforated, and then polished. During the process of wampum-making the hinges of the clam shells were preserved, set aside, and afterward shaped and polished, making a second, and more valuable coinage. The third and most coveted type of Indian money was cut in small disc-shaped pieces from a species of magnesite found near Clear Lake. When baked, this stone becomes a vivid red, and after being polished the small perforated discs were very attractive. Though their money could not be used in bartering with their Russian friends, its decorative desirability gave it a value among the Indians which made it exchangeable among themselves at all times for articles of a more practical nature. Wampum making was the most important sedentary occupation of the Indian brave.

Native pastimes.--In the time unoccupied by food-gathering activities, and warfare, their leisure was spent in the ceremonials mentioned, in gambling, in playing games, and in feasting. At the Indian quarters about Ross, a gambling game was nearly always in progress, the stakes being usually the newly acquired wealth from the trading store. One of their most favored and typical games is described as follows:

They cut a number of small sticks. One of the players, sitting on his haunches, whirls them about with great velocity, in the meantime shouting, singing, and twisting himself about, his object being to avert the attention of his opponent from his hands, and when at a favorable moment he has succeeded in hiding some of the sticks in the grass which lies before him, he holds his hands with the remaining sticks behind



photo courtesy of David Peri

POMO WEAVER

his back. His opponent in the game must guess how many sticks are in the grass. If he does not guess, he loses: in the other case he wins. Their passion for the game is so great that at Port Roumiantzoff, having received from us presents of tobacco and other trifles, they sat down under our eyes, and gambled for what we had given them.

Summary of the decade.--A leisurely, lazy time for the Indians hanging about the fort, but days filled with the bustling activities of shipbuilding, sea-venturing, and crop raising by the colonists, were these first ten years of Russian settlement. Their greatest significance lies in the facts that during this time the Russians settled themselves firmly into the routine of their new environment, and the Indians became their fast friends. Both of these factors were to have great influence upon the period to come. Almost as soon as the Russian presence in California became known, Spanish protests against the maintenance of their stronghold began.

These, though frequent and couched in the usual official bombast, had during this first decade, been shunted aside with diplomatic evasion, and with elaborate promises to refer the matter to the proper authorities. Inasmuch as the seats of central power in both governments were thousands of miles removed, and the strength of the Russian armaments made inadvisable any provincial efforts of the Spanish at removal, the establishments at Ross and Bodega continued under the displeasure of Spanish officialdom, but unmolested. The Russian River Valley itself had been unaltered except for the deepening of the foot and horsepaths leading to the coast, and the lives of its inhabitants had been but little changed except for the adoption and use of articles secured at the fort. The decade 1811-1821 was essentially one of security and prosperity for both Russians and Indians, a situation which was causing the Spanish in San Francisco no little concern, and which gradually aroused to activity the sluggish machinery of Spanish military and civil objection.

The Americans (Indians) of Upper California

(WRANGEL'S TRIP THROUGH THE RUSSIAN
RIVER VALLEY, 1834)

I have seen the Americans living in the surroundings of the settlement Ross (in latitude 38°30"N) in narrow passages of the mountains, defiles from all sides encircling it, and in the valleys, laying behind the first ridge to the east, along which flows the river Slavianka, discharging herself in the sea about 7 miles to the south of the mentioned settlement.

After taking of the grain (wheat and barley) from the steep declivities of the mountains, and after finishing other necessary agriculture labors at Ross, we undertook a trip to the valleys. One of my guides was wounded with an arrow by a savage in the ear a year before this, in the same valley, where we intended to travel.

Several of the savages of the same tribe not long since made an attack on the nearest to San Francisco mission of the Spaniards and plundered it. Such splendid exploits suggested or instilled some esteem for the savages and we agreed to render them the deserved honour, to surround us with a guard of honor and arming us with loaded pistols. In this manner, the cavalcade, excluding us three, consisted of 21 horsemen, in that number of Russians, 2 pakats, 6 Aleuts, 4 American vaqueros, and 2 interpreters with quivers filled with arrows behind the back. September 10 we were drawing to the mountain on the Bodega road. In this time of the year the horses are exhausted from the frequent riding on them and very lean from the scanty food. In the bay of Bodega 15 miles from Ross, there is a brick yard and a store for storing from the ships of the Co. arriving with cargoes for the settlement of Ross where there is no anchorage. The road from Ross to Bodega is cut through the woods and leads over the mountains one half further along the shores of the sea and woodless deserts, hardly to be seen in the neighborhood of Ross, where by great droves of horned and other cattle all the grass already dried up from the

long duration of the summer heat were gone out. This obliged us to drive before us led gorses in such a number as our men needed, and above this two mules packed with road provisions or supplies for about 4 days.

Crossing the River Slavianka near her mouth, now washed up with sand, we turned to the left, to the mountains, leaving the sea behind our backs, and made our way through cavities, forrests, and thickets to places more even and less overgrown and though we rode by trail beaten out by the savages, who travelled by it from the valley to the sea shore to collect the testaceans for food, however we did not meet any of them. At last, and coming to a large overgrown with grass valley, we heard loud singing voices, the interpreters hurried away in advance to recognize friend or enemy meets us. Our own impatience to see the inhabitants of these lonely places, made us speed after our avantguard and in full gallop we all surprised an old woman of these American tribes, gathering some kind of herb corns in her basket plaited from fine roots. From fear she was stupified, not without difficulty we ascertained that behind the nearest thicket there are living several families of these Americans, who without doubt, had already noticed us at this time concealed themselves, fearing to fall into the hands of the Spaniards, not seldom riding out to catch the savages to convert them to the Christian faith, and that gathering the corns for food, sung out of her full throat, to disperse and drive off the evil spirits, always obeying the voice, repelling a hundred times in the mountains. Assuring the old woman that her voice did not attract evil intended people, we left her in peace and continued on our ways. The first night we stopped on a considerable collected plain valley between several hills, on the shore of a little river, falling in the Slavianka under branched oaks. The warm mild air, the clear sky, the moonlight night, the bivouac fires, and herding of the horses in the high grass, all this presented a picture agreeable to the imagination and the feeling. The piercing and shrill howls of the jackals disturbed the harmony

of nature, but with the beginning of daylight all became quiet, and we hurried forward with impatience to reach the famous valleys spoken of in Ross and to meet their inhabitants. Soon the places became wider and enlarged, extended fields with rich vegetable earth, covered with fat grasses, opened themselves one after another, but nowhere even a trace of inhabitants. Suddenly we perceived on the far edge of the valley a winding stream of smoke: the interpreters and vaqueros concluded that there must be a village of many American natives and with some fear communicated to us this information. The smoothness and spaciousness of the place permitted our whole army out of 5 nations to unroll by front and gallop with loose bridles so as not to give time to the savages to conceal themselves in the bushes.

Advancing and nearing, we behold a wretched miserable tree and not the least sign of the presence of people, further beautiful groves of oak as an English park, were changing with fields of grass, and at last we rode up to the river Slavianka which during the summer season is dried up in several places, there where we were crossing it or fording it, she was not broader than 5 fathoms and not deeper than three feet. Arranging ourselves on her left shore in the bushes to dine, we heard voices drawing near to us from the savages closing or shutting out behind ourselves the horses which were left grazing, we sent the interpreters to meet the comers, who it proved were friendly visitors, attracted to come here with the desire to see us. Their number was about 15 men. Their wives and children remained in the village nearby. From them we learned that the villains (Sotoyomis) who took revenge on the Spaniards for the violation of the tranquillity of these peaceful inhabitants of these valleys by pillaging the mission of the savages, have placed themselves in ambuscade behind inaccessible bushes beyond the large valley in front, where they are ready to repulse and attack of their enemies. Our guides meanwhile learned that one highly esteemed chief of these American tribes, had been at Ross, and being treated kindly by the Russians is

at present here in the surroundings: I wished to see him, and asked our guests to inform him of our arrival. The eldest chief chose one young lad as a messenger; this one throwing off his light cover or girdle, taking up his bow in his hands, was lost out of sight in so short a time that we had no opportunity to recompense him with small presents for his for his willingness of service. The open, joyful, unanxious outlines of their faces of these savages, and their kind intercourse pleased me very much; we invited them to visit us in our night bivouac and they promised to find out wherever we would stop. Yet before evening arrived we reached the very largest valley; at the beginning there is no wood or forest, and even like a table, covered by fat, fragrant grass, and viewless (immense) in her broadness (wideness) was not less than 40 versts, here mountains from the right and left presented themselves to the view, their acquainted perimeter made us remark the nearness of our settlement Ross, wherefrom they are viewed; In a direct distance through impassable ridges and gaps we were now not more than 25 versts from Ross, though we had made in a round about way, about 75. The Slavianka here pressed herself more to the Western mountains, and a small river, winding herself in the middle of the valley falls into her. We turned aside, and directed our way back through the fields, lying at both sides of the rivulet. The night overtook us in one of those beautiful groves of oak, by which here and there the plains are variegated. Our horses nearly drowned in the fragrant, high grasses which covered these plains. The bivouac fires in the camp twined between the dark green oaks of a hundred years. Deep silence surrounded us in these so generous gifted by nature places, and hardly had the night watchers, the jackals, begun their complaining howling, as at our bivouac fires appeared our friends the native Americans. Receiving from us tobacco, biscuits, beads, they sat down in circles with their countryman our interpreters and vaqueros, and took up their favorite and it can be said their constant occupation, whenever circumstances permitted, the play of even and uneven numbers. The

two players sit one opposite another, on the sides of each are the choirs of singers, and the sweet melodies of their voices is only interrupted by the short and loud exclamations of the guessing or winning player, the antagonist, who endeavoring to conceal the true number of small sticks, which he holds in the hand behind his back, made very similar and different motions with both hands, with one beating time to the song on his bosom. The play always continues to the time, when all and everything is clean lost by one of the players. This play interested our guests and the vaqueros during the whole night, even to the very morning.

I wished to see the village of our friends; they hurried to inform their relatives of our visit and then led us about ten versts, walking ahead with such easiness and to the view (eye) imperceptible swiftness, that to follow their steps, we were obliged to follow them on horseback trotting. Behind bushes and dried up channels, we found on sandy ground the village of the native Americans. They consisted of from 5 to 6 families, inter-related between themselves. From white water willow's rods, put in the ground, the wives of these savages had built their temporary asylum or place of refuge. With such a taste, which astonished me in a very agreeable manner, the leaves of several shades and size of the willows, which are found here in great variety, gave a joyful view and rural simplicity from the opening to the top hut, and the opening for entering was trimmed with branches, with special care; several huts were aired by interior openings. The leafes were yet preserved in all their freshness, but before they are dried up the inhabitants leave the huts, the women take the little children (infants), and utensils on their backs, and carry them by sustaining the burden from the forehead by means of straps. The men show the new place and order is again (anew) created, so that after a few days these huts can be abandoned.

The women and old men were taken by surprise and fear by our appearance, and seemingly desired that we would leave them in peace. However, all were kind and showed in detail the property of their poor husbandry. In a few baskets were preserved the supply of dough from pounded acorns, thin gruel from

grains of wild rye, and other herbs, and fish caught in the rivulet. The savages catch the fish, by strewing on the water a powder, received from a root, called here Soap Root, from which the fish becomes insensible, and floats up to the surface of the water. The game hunting belongs as a matter of business to the men, but weaving, sewing, and thread making, as also all hard and difficult labours are put on the women. To this division of obligations, probably we must describe the curious phenomenon that the wives of the native Americans generally are stronger built than the men, who are of fine stature, and a well proportioned system of all their members.

The Indians told us that during the summer season, neither the fogs or rains did disturb the constant clearness of the sky in these valleys. The air was always mild, and changing very little. But in the winter the rains are pouring down, the Slavianka steps out of her shores, and overflows all the lower plains and places and gives them new force and strength for vegetation. The forests here principally consists of oak of three kinds, laurel or bay tree, red or ash tree, and a tree called at Ross wormwood tree, but which is the real strawberry (erdbeerenbaum in German). Grass is here very varying and fragrant, of the animals we saw wild Goats the glutton, and jackal, but there is no doubt that here are found all the same animals which are naturally to all upper California.

By these informations our short acquaintance with the wild inhabitants of the plains of the Rivulet were limited. But in the settlement of Ross I had occasion to see them often and therefore it will be permitted to me to express here some opinion, received from these people and the very country they inhabited made upon me.

By the direction of the mountains, rivers, positions of the Lakes, and similar natural boundaries has been formed a separate natural bound. All over upper California, inhabited by savages, differing in their languages, and maybe in their origin, through the character of the climate and the productions of the country, the manner of living and

the same step or level of children, on which all these tribes are yet found, justifies manners, and characters there must be remarked a mutual similarity. The Bodega American Indians with difficulty understand the languages of those, who live on the plains of the river Slavianka, and the Savages who are living to the North of Ross, do not at all understand them. Behind the first chain of hills surrounding the plains from the Eastern side are roving or rambling other tribes, unknown to all others, and in one Mission San Carlos (about Monterey) there are counted eleven tribes of American Indians, speaking so many different languages, brought there from the surroundings.

So long as there will not be put together a dictionary with etimologic discernment or judgement, and all these languages examined, nobody should rely on the assurances of the savages that they (their languages) are perfectly differing one from another. It may be that their different languages are only different branches from one primitive language, and all tribes are the members of one people or nation. The very same reasons which produce the mutual alienation of such a multitude of different tribes, living in very near distances one of another, formed also other characteristic lines or sketches of these savages.

Feeding principally on acorns (the chase, or hunting of animals is more a pleasure for the men, than a means of subsistence or livelihood) wild chestnuts, and on grains of different herbs, they can not unite in populous societies and must go find food for themselves, leave the too much increased settlements, and lead a wandering, rambling life: even those who live constantly in some large settlement, built on some advantageous places, are obliged to collect their supplies on a very large scale. Such a manner of life, accustomed them to change their places continually, not permitting a superfluity in their supplies of eatable provisions, turn aside the cares, and supports the bodily activity, must nourish a natural inclination in the native Americans for independence and reflects in their plays, songs, music, and in the very handiworks, even in

such objects which they use for their ornament, as head dress, girdles, necklaces, made mostly from feathers of a different form revealing not only an inventive faculty of the mind, but even some fineness in taste, their languages, the melody of the voices, and the tunes of their songs are agreeable or pleasant for the ear, and void of those sad or dejected monotony and unclear, difficult to pronounce, guttural syllables, which we find in the songs and languages of the Indians, Aleuts, all Northern native Americans, and the Schuksteks, living near the North Coasts. For their dances, though, they appear as savages, but the play of imagination or fancy even there strike agreeably the impartial observer. Their attires, motions, chorus of the singers, the very decoration of the forests, give the spectacle or show the character of a kind of wild poetry (poetic wildness) by no means brutal as by the Northern Indians (Koloshi). Accustomed with want, and finding in their grove of oaks or forests and valleys all necessary to support life, though they rejoice in things, which they receive from the troublesome Europeans, however, no otherwise as with constraint for the acquirement of which they even sacrifice their liberty for a short time. Tobacco, beads, clothing, all what they receive, they immediately put up in the play of even and uneven numbers, undergoing the caprice of Fortune. Losing all, they regret the loss of the precious things, but only because they have nothing more to lose in the plays and with a jotful spirit occupy the places in the choirs of singers, accompanying all plays and dances. Food from vegetative substances, a mild climate, and the very manner of life has formed the temperament of these savages mostly weak sanguinary (not blood-thirsty). They love songs, dances, plays, they are soft hearted and not revengeful, murder is very seldom between them.

In civil wars fearlessness and force are esteemed. Enemies taken as prisoners, they do not kill, but at the end of the quarrel are exchanged, never are turned to slaves, as the Kiloshi (Northern Indians) and other savage tribes do. Their children they love

tenderly, subordination is patriarchally observed between them, and all younger members of the same tribe, honor with due preference, old age, experience, skillfulness to handle the bows, The esteem not seldom is transferred from the father to the son, but the power of the chief over others is of not much account. He who wishes to leave the family village and go to other places has full liberty to do so.

Being astonished with the great advantages of the Europeans, armed with deathful weapons and on their horses overtaking the swift chamois, these savages seem timid. This timidity is explained by one mindedness in opposition or contrast to that sharp wit, with which the Spanish Christian loving Pastors understood to drive these poor people to their missions in whole herds or droves, treating them as beings not worth the name of men. Nobody can be more unjust than similar conclusions. Contrary nature has bestowed these savages with good intellectual and soul capacities; in the missions they soon learn the artifices and craftiness of their teachers, easy acquire different handicrafts and mechanical works, daring and skillful ride on horses and speak the Spanish language.

Finding no use whatever in all these elements of civilization, destroying or making them loose their liberty, the savages lose no opportunity to conceal themselves again in their forests. Being peaceful from nature, and timid against their enemies, such powerful ones as the Europeans seemed to them at first, the savages learning afterwards that they were also such men as they themselves. But more unfeeling and more unjust, were aroused and inflamed by the spirit of revenge, destroying herds, leading horses away, attacking the missions and giving up to pillage. However, punishing by death only those who especially had exasperated them by cruelty, per example, some angry Padre.

This very revenge does not go out of the boundary of philanthropy with these savages, and is not similar to that brutal ecstasy which signalizes the Kiloshi (Western Indians along the

Sea Coast. transl. remark) killing all exclusively with the sharp dagger in similar attacks, in whose veins only flows European blood, even little children.

Comparing the savages of California with Koloshi (Northern Sea Coast Indians) ought not to be forgotten, that the latter are secured in their subsistence or livelihood by the inexhaustible pasture for millions of people: the Sea or Ocean, and those living along its Coasts, could gather themselves in populous societies, and in their canoes (boats) easy communicate with their neighbors. From this the feeling of nationality must necessarily sooner be developed, the attachment for the possession of treasures, increased, the spirit of industry revive each and all. The right of the strong took that aspect of cruelty, by which the Koloshi distinguish themselves, but for this they have lost all agreeable qualities, preserved in full freshness by the Savages of California.

(Signed) F. Wrangel.

Historical Society Notes

In conjunction with our recent museum show, "Survival in the Early West", on March 24, Steven Smith, Executive Director of Ya-Ka-Ama (Indian Educational Center) talked to the Historical Society about the Native American Civilization in Sonoma County.

Our May 19 meeting was an informative talk on Mother Lode Medicine presented by Dr. Frank Norman.

On July 30, several speakers came to our general meeting to tell us about their Bed and Breakfast Inns in Healdsburg. These speakers included Custis Piper of the Belle du Jour, Ray Lewand of the Camellia Inn, Carol Muir of the Madronna Manor, Genny Jenkins of the Healdsburg Inn, and Joanne Clause of the Hayden House.

And we would like to remind our members to PLEASE PAY YOUR DUES FOR 1983 if you have not already done so. 1984 is almost upon us.

HISTORIC ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY
SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED

Museum News

The Exhibit "Survival in the Early West" closed recently at the Edwin Langhart Museum. This display featured artifacts from four of the main cultural groups that settled the Russian River Valley, including large collections of Pomo lithics and basketry, early firearms, and the hand-wrought tools of the early white pioneers. If you missed the show SHAME ON YOU. And be sure to make it to the FIFTH ANNUAL CHRISTMAS ANTIQUE AND COLLECTIBLE TOY AND DOLL EXHIBIT, which opened in November. It will feature a joyous collection of antique and collectible toys including outstanding displays of dolls, trains, Disney memorabilia and tin wind-up toys. Many nostalgia and one-of-a-kind toys will also be featured. Be sure to take the time over the busy holiday season to come in and see this display.

Our thanks to those who donated or loaned items for our display "Survival in the Early West":

PHOEBE B. BOIVIN	BARCLAY NALLEY
RICHARD CORROW	RICHARD PRIVAT
RICHARD CRANE	DR. FRANCIS RITZ
CAROL EAGLE	GRETCHEN ROSENBERG
FRANCES ETCHELL	IRA ROSENBERG
ART GARDNER	PATRICK SIMMONS
ELVA GRANT	SONOMA COUNTY HIST. SOC.
GEORGE GREEOTT	JIM VOSS
ADDIE MARIE MEYER	JIMI McCLISH

ARTIFACT DONATIONS to this Museum have been received from:

FRED COMBS	ALLEN OWEN
GEORGE DUPUIS	CECIL PETRAY
WAYNE GOODRICH	MAJOR PHILLIPS
FRANZ GOSTISHA	ELEANOR READ
W. A. HIATT	BARBARA SCHREIBER
JANE JENSEN	ROSEMARY WELLS
MARILYN JOHNSON	MARGARET VAN ECK
JUNE JONES	

MUSEUM HOURS: WEEKDAYS 12 to 5 p.m.
Sat. 1 to 4 p.m.

The Healdsburg Cultural Resource Survey, begun in July of 1982, was completed in September, 1983. The survey documents over 450 historically or architecturally significant properties in a 76 square mile area surrounding and including the City of Healdsburg. The City, the County, and the State now have detailed information regarding these properties and properties will now be eligible for local or national landmark status, and the tax credits for rehabilitation that are offered by the Federal Government.

The Langhart Museum researched about 1500 properties in the course of this survey, and in fact redid the major portion of the final product in a record two months time. The State of California has granted the City of Healdsburg \$14,000 in matching funds for this survey.

All interested property owners may view the survey at the Langhart Museum, or call 433-4717.
(SEE PAGE 15 THIS ISSUE)

†IN MEMORIAM†

WE WISH TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE FOLLOWING HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERS WHO HAVE PASSED AWAY IN RECENT MONTHS.

Cleane Carlene Clayburn
Jack L. Neely
Birdice Warren Phillips
Philip Edmund Phillips



*If you know of a member who has died, please let us know so that we can inform our readers.



THE EDWIN LANGHART MUSEUM
AND THE CITY OF HEALDSBURG
WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE
WHO GAVE SO GENEROUSLY OF THEMSELVES AND THEIR TIME
TO COMPLETE THE HEALDSBURG CULTURAL RESOURCE SURVEY

Frances Etchell
April McDonald
Dorothy Walters
Modesta Sanchez

AND TO ALL THE MANY OTHERS, TOO NUMEROUS TO LIST,
WE THANK YOU



(You are worth every centimeter of a full-page add)

MANY ARE CALLED-BUT FEW ANSWER!!!!

WE NEED YOUR HELP

We have a large membership but very few workers. Those few are becoming battle weary. Below is a list of activities of the Society and a description of what is involved in each. Isn't there something here that might interest you?

Museum Cocent Coordinator: responsible for recruiting and scheduling Museum docents (a vital position for the health of the Museum).

Museum Docent: act as public information resource, security, and receptionist at Museum during open hours. Do you like people?

Museum Special Task Force: mostly help in all phases of construction and dismantling of Museum exhibits. Are you creative, strong? Also host of other exotic Museum activities.

Historical Quarterly Staff: Hey, folks, this is fun! Help put out what we think is the best historical periodical in the County.

Coordinating Guest Speakers: Put on a good program - find interesting speakers in the field and put them in the limelight.

Publicity: write newspaper articles

make flyers, and generally find new and better ways to spread the word.
Fundraising: Help us make money to support the Museum, the Russian River Recorder and a host of other historical research projects.

Mailing: a simple task, but one of the most necessary.

Membership Chairman: keep track of our member master list (and keep us all sane) and think of ways to recruit new members.

Hospitality Chairman: Do you have a flair for setting a table? Make our members feel at home at general meetings by coordinating refreshments.

Oral History: help us record the precious knowledge held in the mind of our seniors. You will be trained.

Newspaper Indexing: Much work has been done, but much remains - scan old local papers for pertinent info and put onto index cards. Researchers will thank you forever.

Officer on the Board of Directors: Do you have a flair for organization? Let us know you are interested and your nomination in the future is almost a sure thing.

Paying Dues: simply mail your check: \$5.00 active, \$25.00 sustaining, to the address below. But we still need your body!

I am interested in supporting the Healdsburg Historical Society by participating in the following way.

_____ Museum Docent Coordinator

_____ Museum Docent

_____ Museum Special Task Force

_____ Historical Quarterly Staff

_____ Coordinating Guest Speakers

_____ Publicity

_____ Fundraising

_____ Mailing

_____ Membership Chairman

_____ Hospitality Chairman

_____ Newspaper Indexing

_____ Oral History

_____ Serving as an officer on the Board of Directors

_____ Paying my 1983 or 1984 membership dues

Mail to: Healdsburg Historical Society .
P.O. Box 952
Healdsburg, CA 95448