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AGRICULTURAL LABOR, RACE, AND INDIAN POLICY ON THE
ROUND VALLEY RESERVATION, 1850-1941

A DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

By

WILLIAM J. BAUER, JR.
Norman, Oklahoma
2003

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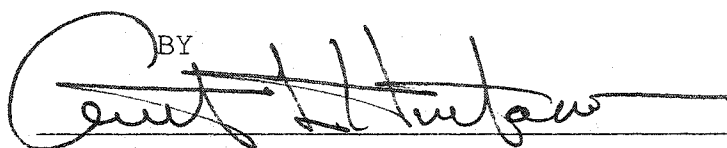
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ROUND VALLEY RESERVATION, 1850-1941

A DISSERTATION APPROVED FOR THE
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

BY


Albert Hurtado



R. Warren Metcalf



Clara Sue Kidwell



Donald Pisani



Sean O'Neill

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ABBREVIATIONS

1880 MS Census	National Archives, Microfilm 1791, Schedules of a Special Census of Indians, 1880, roll 5
Administrative Files	National Archives and Records Administration - San Bruno, Record Group 75, Records of the Round Valley Agency, 1858-1930, Administrative Files, 1908-1924.
Agency Reports	National Archives and Records Administration - San Bruno, Record Group 75, Records of the Round Valley Agency, 1858-1930, Agency Reports, 1872-1913.
Agent-CIA Correspondence	National Archives and Records Administration San Bruno, Record Group 75, Records of the Round Valley Agency, 1858-1930, Correspondence of Agent/Superintendent to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1873-1914.
ARCIA	Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs
Authorizations And Requests	National Archives and Records Administration - San Bruno, Record Group 75, Records of the Round Valley Agency, 1858-1923, Funding Authorizations by the Indian Office, 1899-1909, Authorizations and Requests for Authorizations
CCC-ID	National Archives and Records Administration - San Bruno, Record Group 75, Records of the Sacramento Agency, Records of the IECW Program and the CCC Indian Division, 1933-1943
CHMP	C. Hart Merriam Papers, BANC FILM 1022, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley
C-A 360	California League for American Indians Records, BANC MSS C-A 360, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.
C-R 2	Source Material Gathered by Federal Writers' Project on Migratory Labor, District No. 8, BANC MSS C-R 2, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.
CU-23	Records of the Department of Anthropology, University Archives, BANC MSS CU-23, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley
Downs Papers	Thomas Downs Papers, William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan
Goodrich Papers	Papers of Chauncey Shafter Goodrich, 1917-1934, BANC MSS 79/59 c, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.
IWP	Records of the Adjutant General, Indian War Papers, California State Archives
JWDP	James William Denver Papers, BANC MSS 92/759c, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.
Letters Received, 1881-1907	National Archives and Records Administration, Old Military and Civil Records (Washington, D.C.), Record Group 75, Letters Received, 1881-1907.

M234	Letters Received by the Office of Indian Affairs, 1824-1881, National Archives Microfilm 234
M595	Indian Census Rolls, 1885-1940, National Archives Microfilm 595.
M1011	Superintendent's Annual Narrative and Statistical Reports from Field Jurisdictions of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, 1907-1938, National Archives Microfilm 1011
M1070	Reports of Inspection of the Field Jurisdictions of the Office of Indian Affairs, 1873-1900, National Archives Microfilm 1070
OR	<i>The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies</i> , 70 vols. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1897)
Receipts and Disbursements	National Archives and Records Administration - San Bruno, Record Group 75, Records of the Round Valley Agency, 1858-1930, Records of Receipts and Disbursements, 1875-1895, 1907-1919.
Records of Sherman	National Archives and Records Administration - Laguna Niguel, Record Group 75, Records of the Sherman Indian Institute.
RVOHP	Round Valley Oral History Project, Round Valley Public Library
RV-149	National Archives and Records Administration - San Bruno, Record Group 75, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Records of the Sacramento Area Office, 1923-1956, Records of the Realty Office, Case Records of Land Transactions, 1909-1956, folder: Wright, Charles, RV-149.
RV-224	National Archives and Records Administration - San Bruno, Record Group 75, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Records of the Sacramento Area Office, 1923-1956, Records of the Realty Office, Case Records of Land Transactions, 1909-1956, box: 15, folder: Brown, Eva, RV-224.
SCS General Records	National Archives and Records Administration - San Bruno, Record Group 114, Records of the Soil Conservation Service, Pacific Southwest Region, Santa Paula Region and Office, General Records, 1935-1939
Special Cases	National Archives and Records Administration - Washington, D.C., Record Group 75, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Special Cases, 1821-1907, Special Case 43.
Student Case Files	National Archives and Records Administration - Laguna Niguel, Record Group 75, Records of the Sherman Institute, Student Case Files.
Student Outings	National Archives and Records Administration - Laguna Niguel, Record Group 75, Records of Student Outings, Time/Pay Worksheets, 1917-1929.
Thomas Elmer Collection	Thomas Elmer Collection, Carl A. Albert Center, University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma.

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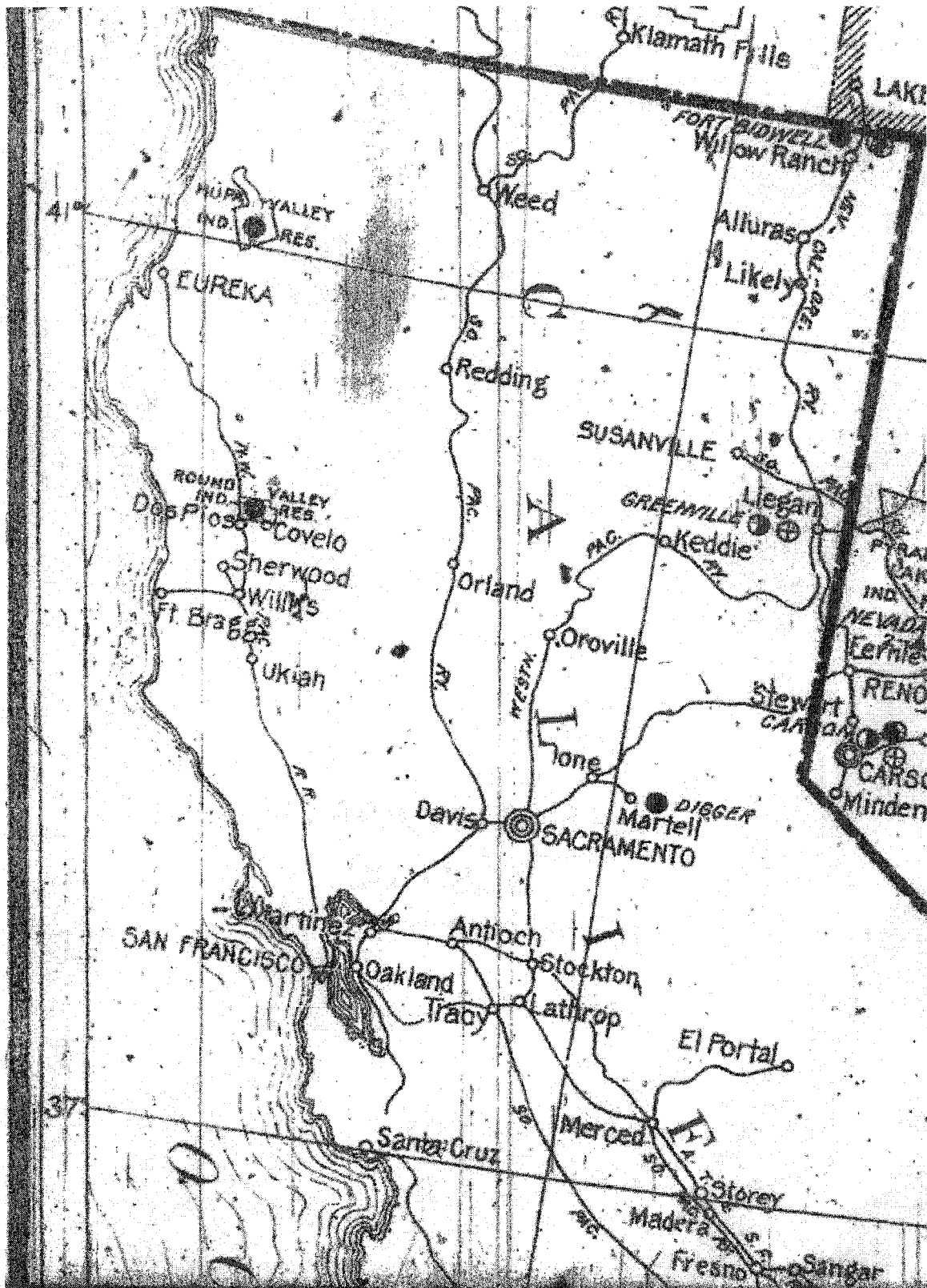


Figure 1: Map of northern California in the twentieth century. The Round Valley Reservation is located north of the San Francisco Bay Area. Map courtesy of the Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office).

Introduction

While describing the jobs he had done in his life, Acie Hoaglen, a Concow who lived on the Round Valley Reservation, stated, "I didn't care too much for picking prunes, [but]...I didn't mind [working in] the hops."¹ Anyone familiar with agricultural labor or Mendocino County's summers might question that statement. People who worked with Hoaglen may certainly provide contrasting descriptions of hop picking. After all, picking hops in one hundred degree heat can be tedious, exhausting, and uncomfortable. But, if we look at the broader meanings of migrant labor - the social, cultural, and economic implications - we may understand Hoaglen and other American Indians better.

This study examines the labor history of the Indians on the Round Valley Reservation from the era of first contact to 1941 when logging began to replace migrant labor as the primary source of employment for Round Valley Indians. The Round Valley Reservation is 150 miles north of the San Francisco Bay area, and currently home to approximately 1,000 Indians and non-Indians. The federal government recognizes seven tribes in Round

¹ Acie Hoaglen, *Voices and Dreams: A Mendocino County Native American Oral History*, Sally Russell and Bruce Levene, eds. (Ukiah, CA: Mendocino County Library, 1990), 87.

Valley - the Yuki, Wailacki, Concow, Pit River, Little Lake, Pomo, and Redwood. Some of these tribes are indigenous to the Round Valley area and others were removed from various parts of the state.

This dissertation argues labor is central to understanding the history of the Round Valley Indians. This belief is rooted in personal experiences, archival research, and fieldwork. I grew up on the Round Valley reservation and am an enrolled tribal member. After living and working on the reservation for more than twenty years, I recognize the centrality of labor to people's lives. Nearly everyone worked in either agriculture or the timber industry. While doing archival research, labor issues emerged repeatedly, often in the most unexpected places. Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the California state government, and Indian welfare organizations implicitly and explicitly addressed labor's importance in Indians' lives. Finally, everyone that I interviewed for this project had at one time or the other worked as migrant agricultural workers, usually in the hop fields. Thus, agricultural labor connected the experiences Round Valley Indians with one another and with their ancestors.

Labor and work considerations pervaded all aspects of Indian life in northern California. Historian Elliott West reminds us after contact Indian and white histories were inextricably interwoven - scholars cannot speak of one without the other - and labor issues lay at the heart of Indian-white relations in Round Valley.² Indians and whites met daily at various worksites, where white ranchers continually reordered race relations in the state in an effort to marginalize California Indians.

Scholars recognize race is a socially constructed ideology rather than a fixed biological category. Racial definitions of minority and ethnic groups changed throughout history depending on historical and ideological circumstances. Historians have recently begun to address the intersection of race and labor in the history of the United States. Most of this literature examines the construction of racial ideas about African Americans, the tension between free labor and slavery, and the implications of Emancipation. Historians have called this direction in the history of labor and race "whiteness studies," because they are concerned with the way white workers constructed their

² Elliott West, *The Contested Plains: Indians, Goldseekers, and the Rush to Colorado* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1998), 13.

racial definitions vis-à-vis African Americans. Other scholars, such as Alexander Saxton and Neil Foley, have included other groups, such as Chinese and Hispanics, in their analysis. These scholars, unfortunately, have ignored American Indians. For the most part, this stems from the perception that whites wanted land from Indians, not their labor.³ While this may be the case in some parts of the country, it was not so in California.

In northern California, white ranchers racially defined Indians in the workplace in an effort to break up the reservation, occupy Indian land, and secure Indians as a pliant labor force. The Indians' status as workers in an agricultural economy suggested they were racially inferior to landowning whites. Whites believed those who failed to accumulate property did so because of class and

³ Barbara Fields was one of the first scholars to recognize ideological roots of race in the United States. See "Ideology and Race in American History," in *Region, Race and Reconstruction: Essays in Honor of C. Vann Woodward*, J. Morgan Kousser and James McPherson, eds. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 143-77. For a recent survey of race, labor, and the proliferation of "whiteness" studies see, Peter Kolchin, "Whiteness Studies: The New History of Race in America," *Journal of American History* 89 (June 2002), 154-73. Two of the most important works in the development of "whiteness studies" are David Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class* (New York: Routledge Press, 1991) and Noel Ignatiev, *How the Irish Became White* (New York: Routledge Press, 1995). For the application of these ideas to Hispanic workers see Neil Foley, *The White Scourge: Mexicans, Blacks, and Poor Whites in Texas Cotton Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997). For the treatment of Chinese workers in a similar context see Alexander Saxton, *The Indispensable Enemy: Labor and the anti-Chinese Movement in California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971).

racial deficiencies. Furthermore, landless people depended on the landed elite for their economic livelihoods. These beliefs, and the concomitant efforts of whites to train Indians as accommodating and efficient workers, suggest California whites wanted Indian labor and land. Their effectiveness in this campaign demonstrates local whites exerted an enormous influence in the execution of federal Indian policy. Too often, Indian policy fulfilled the wishes of white economic interests, rather than the intended beneficiaries - California Indians. This study, then, strives to expand our understanding of the ways whites racially defined Indians, the importance of land and labor in Indian-white relations, and the significance of local conditions in the implementation of Indian policy.

Government officials, though, defended the role of labor in informing and employing federal Indian policy. As many historians have discovered (and many reservation Indians intuitively understand), the federal government has an enormous presence in the American West.⁴ Indians labored on the federal government's creation: a

⁴ See, for instance, Richard White, "Western History," in *The New American History*, Eric Foner, ed., Revised and Expanded Edition (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1997), 220-22. For an expanded discussion of the state in the American West see, Richard White, *"It's Your Misfortune, and None of My Own": A New History of the American West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma, 1991).

reservation. Reservation agents hoped labor would teach Indians the important values of hard work, thrift, and individualism, at the same time labor disciplined and controlled the Indian population. Thus, California Indian agents employed labor to civilize Indians. If Indians worked under the federal agents' benevolent eye, they would learn American values of thrift, responsibility, and ambition quicker than on their own. Indian department employees also attempted to control labor by disseminating Indian workers to centers of economic activity in California.⁵ Thus, Indian labor served the broader goals of federal Indian policy as well as the local economy.

⁵ Any discussion of federal Indian policy begins with Francis Paul Prucha, *The Great White Father: The United States Government and the American Indians*, 2 vols. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984). Other important sources include Robert Trennert, *Alternative to Extinction: Federal Indian Policy and the Beginnings of the Reservation Policy, 1846-51* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1975) and Frederick Hoxie, *A Final Promise: The Campaign to Assimilate the Indians, 1880-1920* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2001, 1984). For Indian policy in California see, Albert Hurtado, *Indian Survival on the California Frontier* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), 125-48; George Harwood Phillips, *Indians and Indian Agents: The Origins of the Reservation System in California, 1848-52* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997); James Rawls, *Indians of California: The Changing Image* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1984), 137-71; John Findlay, "An Elusive Institution: The Birth of Indian Reservations in Gold Rush California," in *State and Reservation: New Perspectives on Federal Indian Policy*, eds. George Pierre Castille and Robert Bee, (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1992), 13-37. Harry Kelsey, "The California Indian Treaty Myth," *Southern California Quarterly* 55 (1973), 225-38; William Ellison, "The Federal Indian Policy in California, 1846-1860," *Mississippi Valley Historical Quarterly* 9 (June 1922), 37-67; Chauncey Goodrich, "The Legal Status of the California Indian," *California Law Review* 14 (January 1926), 83-100.

Historians have disagreed about the state's role in American workers' lives. On one hand, since the New Deal the government has grudgingly supported the organization of workers in the United States. On the other hand, since the New Deal the government has neglected the organization of United States *agricultural* workers. The federal government has often responded to the needs of agricultural producers rather than agricultural workers. Furthermore, efforts to protect workers - industrial and agricultural - have often increased levels of coercion employees apply to workers. In all of these matters, notions of race inform the state's actions. Whether the discussion involved African Americans during Reconstruction or Mexican braceros, perceived racial inferiorities and the demands of agriculturalists guided the pace and scope of the federal government's actions.⁶ These issues assume particular importance in Round Valley. Until the beginning of World War II, the

⁶ For the role of the state in the lives of migrant agricultural workers see Cindy Hahamovitch, *The Fruits of Their Labor: Atlantic Coast Farmworkers and the Making of Migrant Poverty, 1870-1945* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997). For coercion and the ambiguities of free labor in the American West see, Gunther Peck, *Reinventing Free Labor: Padrones and Immigrant Workers in the North American West, 1880-1930* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Howard Lamar, "From Bondage to Contract: Ethnic Labor in the American West, 1600-1890" in *The Countryside in the Age of Capitalist Transformation: Essays in the Social History of Rural America*, Steven Hahn and Jonathan Prude, eds., (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985), 293-324.

government had a constant presence in Round Valley, used labor to civilize the Indians, and too often, the demands of white ranchers triumphed over the well being of Indian workers.

So far, this introduction touches only on the perspectives of non-Indians and their uses of wage labor. At the heart of this dissertation, though, is the Round Valley Indians and their conceptions of labor. Whites exploited Indian labor, true, but Round Valley Indians also used labor to survive, adapt, and recreate their world. Following the lead of historian Albert Hurtado, this project shifts the perspective of California Indian history from a story of violence and near genocide to one of survival and creative adaptation.⁷ Round Valley Indians made agricultural labor a part of their seasonal and multisource incomes that predated contact. Indians preserved ceremonial practices and recreational activities on agricultural worksites and with the wages they earned. While facing narrowing opportunities, Round Valley Indians fit labor within their economic, ceremonial, and recreational lives.

⁷ Hurtado, *Indian Survival*. For examples of genocide in California see, Lynwood Carranco and Estle Beard, *Genocide and Vendetta: The Round Valley Wars of Northern California* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1981) and Jack Norton, *Genocide in Northwestern California* (San Francisco: Indian Historian Press, 1979).

This study, then, broadens our understanding of old themes in American Indian history: adaptation, accommodation, and resistance. They borrowed from the American society, and adapted older patterns to this new world of work. Working for white ranchers and the federal government represented an accommodation for Indians - they no longer controlled the means for their survival. However, Indians also practiced what sociologist James Scott and historian Eugene Genovese called "everyday forms of resistance" in protest to the worst changes around them.⁸ Indians chose where they worked, protested working conditions, and voiced their disapproval with Indian policy. From the perspective of labor, we enter the fields with Indian workers, understand their lives, and see history from their vantage.

Since the 1960s, historians have been trying to discover the "Indian" viewpoint. For instance, historian Francis Jennings commented on the different meanings American Indians and white Americans invested in the history of colonial America. "From the Indian viewpoint," Jennings wrote, colonial America looked more

⁸ See James Scott, *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986) and Eugene Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made* (New York: Vintage Books, 1976).

like a "period of invasion of Indian society by Europeans" than the beginning of democracy's triumphs in a New World. He hoped ethnohistory would allow scholars to escape the civilization-savagery dichotomy, and approach American Indian societies from a balanced viewpoint.⁹ Recently, scholars have suggested ethnohistory failed to adequately explain the Indian viewpoint, though Daniel Richter has provided a good argument for the continuing benefits of this methodology.¹⁰ Native scholars Devon Mihesuah and Angela Cavender Wilson demand scholars seek American Indian informants, intellectual traditions, and oral histories to write about American Indians. Anything less, they argue, is "non-Indian perceptions of Indian history."¹¹

If done properly, labor history can bridge the chasm between these two camps. The prominent theme of labor history since the publication of Herbert Gutman's classic article on the subject has been the blending (harmoniously and dissonantly) of old and new cultures of work. Typically, labor historians have focused on

⁹ Francis Jennings, *The Invasion of America: Indians, Colonialism, and the Cant of Conquest* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1976), v, 3-14.

¹⁰ Daniel Richter, *Facing East from Indian Country: A Native History of Early America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001).

¹¹ Devon Mihesuah, ed., *Natives and Academics: Researching and Writing about American Indians* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998).

European ethnic immigrants, and charted their experiences in the industrial factories of the United States. Gutman wrote, "What [workers] bring to a factory depends, in good part, on their culture of origin, and how they behave is shaped by the interaction between that culture and the particular society in which they enter."¹²

Historian Melvyn Dubofsky agreed, suggesting in order to understand fully how the transformation from a preindustrial society to an industrial society affected workers, we need to know "what kind of people" they were before industrialization.¹³ These are calls for the ethnohistory of American labor. American Indians are a natural choice for such a direction in labor history. Anthropologists recorded much of pre-contact Indian culture and sometimes unwittingly offered insights into labor conditions during their fieldwork.¹⁴ However, to truly understand the workplace from the perspective of Indian workers, one must listen to their words and the

¹² Herbert Gutman, "Work, Culture, and Society in Industrializing America, 1815-1919," *American Historical Review* 78 (June 1973): 531-88. Quote p. 543.

¹³ Melvyn Dubofsky, *Industrialism and the American Worker, 1865-1920*, 3rd edition (Wheeling: Harlan Davidson, 1996), 9.

¹⁴ George Foster's "A Summary of Yuki Culture," *University of California Publications in Anthropological Records* V (1900-1947), 155-244 is a good example of this. Foster's intent was recording Yuki culture before contact, but his references to hauling hay and paying Indians as anthropological informants provide important information on the history of Indian labor during the Great Depression.

meanings they imbued in their occupations. This project relies heavily on Indian oral history - conducted by myself and by others - to render a far more complete history of Round Valley and the working class.

Conceived of in this manner, the story of Indian labor in northern California broadens our understanding of both Native American and labor history. Few historians think of Indians as migrant agricultural workers nor of migrant agricultural workers as Indians. In his essay on labor in the twentieth-century American West, Carlos Schwantes neglected to mention California Indians in the fields alongside Chinese, Mexican and ethnic wage laborers.¹⁵ In his study of California farmworkers, Cletus Daniel excluded California Indians.¹⁶ However, Indians occupied an important segment of California's agricultural workforce until World War II.

Beginning in 1769 with the establishment of the mission San Diego, Indians worked for Spanish missionaries, soldiers, and settlers at missions,

¹⁵ Carlos Schwantes, "Wage Earners and Wealth Makers," in *The Oxford History of the American West*, Clyde Milner II, Carol O'Connor, Martha Sandweiss, eds., (New York, 1994), 440. While Michael Tomlan noted the importance of Native Americans in the hop picking industry, white owners swept Indian workers aside in California in favor of cheaper Chinese labor. See *Tinged With Gold: Hop Culture in the United States* (Athens, 1992), 127.

¹⁶ Cletus Daniel, *Bitter Harvest: A History of California Farmworkers, 1870-1941* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1981) and Carey McWilliams, *Factories in the Field: The Story of Migratory Farm Labor in California* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1939).

presidios (military settlements) and pueblos (civilian communities). Spanish explorers disdained manual labor and appropriated Indians to work at their settlements. Indian men harvested crops, tended livestock, worked on construction projects, and performed a number of artisanal tasks, including carpentry, blacksmithing, masonry, and brick laying. Indian women washed clothes, prepared meals, and worked as live-in servants. The Spanish invasion of California forced Indians to adjust to new labor arrangements. The introduction of agriculture and missions forced Indians to live in sedentary settlements, and placed Indian men, not women, in charge of agriculture.¹⁷ Despite the changes, however, precontact labor patterns persisted. Indians practiced a gendered division of labor (though turned upside down), and agricultural labor conformed to seasonal fluctuations in work intensity.

Many Indians balked at coming to the new worksites, and Spanish officials coerced Indians to keep them at work. They believed Indians would not work willingly

¹⁷ Steven W. Hackel, "Land, Labor, and Production: The Colonial Economy of Spanish and Mexican California," in *Contested Eden: California before the Gold Rush*, eds. Ramón A. Gutiérrez and Richard J. Orsi (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 121-23; David Weber, *The Spanish Frontier in North America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 123; Albert Hurtado, "California Indians in the Workaday West: Labor, Assimilation, and Survival," *California History* 69 (Spring 1990), 4-5.

because of the abundant land and the natives' supposedly primitive state. Missionaries forbade neophytes (Indians baptized at the missions) from leaving the missions, and scolded, whipped, and imprisoned recalcitrant Indian workers. Native workers resented the coercion at the missions. At Missions San Diego, La Purísima, and Santa Barbara, Indian resentment flared into open rebellion. Indians employed "everyday forms" of resistance as well. They fled the missions (though the Spanish missionaries sent expeditions after the absconding workers), feigned illness, and killed children born of non-Indian fathers.¹⁸ While missionaries deemed coercion necessary for securing Indian workers, Indian resistance mitigated the success of coerced labor.

In 1821, Mexico gained its independence from Spain. The new liberal government in Mexico loosened trade restrictions, limited the Catholic Church's authority, and allowed Alta California to participate in a global trade of cattle hides and tallow. In the place of the mission, the rancho emerged as California's principal economic institution, and Indians performed much of the labor in the hide and tallow trade. Indians tended

¹⁸ Hackel, "Land, Labor, and Production," 124; Edward Castillo, "The Impact of Euro-American Exploration and Settlement," in *Handbook of North American Indians: California*, Robert Heizer, ed., vol. 8, (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1978), 103-04.

livestock, butchered cattle, and processed beef fat.

Indian women cooked meals, washed clothes, and completed other domestic tasks on the ranchos.¹⁹ Rancho owners, as the Spanish before them, used coercion to secure Indian workers. Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo, the most powerful rancho owner in northern California, attacked Indian settlements in the interior of California, and sold or kept the captive Indians.²⁰

The Americans who arrived in California in the 1830s initially accepted the Hispanic labor system. In an attempt to balance Vallejo's power, California governor Juan Alvarado granted John Sutter permission to establish a colony in inland California. As with other settlers of North America, Sutter relied on Indian labor during the first years of New Helvetia. Indians flocked to Sutter's settlement to obtain trade goods. Sutter gave each Indian worker a metal disc punched with a distinctive mark for each day he or she worked. The Indians exchanged their discs for goods at Sutter's store. In return for these payments, Indians harvested crops, built the walls of Sutter's Fort, and served in his personal army. The pervasiveness of Indian labor at Sutter's Fort

¹⁹ Hackel, "Land, Labor, and Production," 129-36, quote 134.

²⁰ Ibid., 129-35; Castillo, "Impact of Euro-American Exploration," 105; Hurtado, *Indian Survival*, 47-48.

led one historian to conclude Indians "created New Helvetia."²¹

Sutter's settlement of inland California eventually helped to end Mexican control over much of the American southwest. Between 1846 and 1848, the United States waged war with Mexico that eventually secured Texas, and seized New Mexico, Arizona, and California. Indians participated in these events as Sutter sent his Indian army to secure the state for Americans. After conquest, American settlers continued to employ Indian workers on their ranches.²²

In 1848, a worker, quite possibly an Indian, found gold at Sutter's mill on the American River, and changed forever the place of Indians in California. The next year, gold-crazed men from all corners of the world streamed into California. At first, the California Gold Rush provided opportunities for Indians. They panned for gold, either in gangs under the direction of white employers like Sutter or individually for themselves. Indian participation in the Gold Rush ended quickly. Whites from the eastern United States recoiled at the appearance of California's labor arrangements. People of

²¹ Hurtado, *Indian Survival*, 49-50, 55-85. Quote p. 50.

²² *Ibid.*, 55-85.

color working under the direction of whites violated the republican free labor sensibilities of many emigrants. Coupled with the fears of Indians generated on the Overland Trail, whites marginalized Indian workers to the worst jobs in mining and agricultural and attacked defenseless villages after the Indian men left to work.²³ The Gold Rush tore apart the social fabric of Mexican California, made it more difficult for Indians to provide for their families, and left few opportunities for California Indians.

At the same time some whites attempted to annihilate California Indians, others desired to maintain Indians as a pliant labor force. In 1850, California passed the Act for the Government and Protection of the Indians, which, to borrow the words of lawyer Chauncey Shafter Goodrich, "did more governing than protecting of Indians."²⁴ The law allowed whites to post bail for Indians accused of misdemeanor crimes, and put him to work to pay off the bond. When the Indian finished working, the rancher often paid him the difference in alcohol. The local magistrate then arrested the Indian for public intoxication and the cycle renewed. In addition, the law

²³ Ibid., 100-24; James Rawls, "Gold Diggers: Indian Miners in the California Gold Rush," *California Historical Quarterly* 55 (Spring 1976): 28-45.

²⁴ Goodrich, "Legal Status," 92.

permitted whites to indenture Indian children with parental consent. White employers had to provide food, clothing and humane treatment, but the state rarely investigated abuses. In 1860, California amended the law to allow third parties to sign over Indian children for indenture.²⁵ Historian James Rawls concludes the law "legalized a system of involuntary servitude in California...[and] the law 'made slaves' of the California Indians."²⁶ Even though whites marginalized Indians in mining districts, a high demand for Indian workers existed in agricultural districts and ranchers turned to the state to retain Indian labor.

The situational demand for Indian workers determined the unique history of California Indian policy. In 1852, three government agents made 18 treaties with 119 California tribes setting aside nearly 7.5 million acres for Indians. However, state leaders protested these treaties because they took potentially valuable mining and agricultural land out of circulation. The incessant lobbying of Californians persuaded the United States Senate to ignore the treaties, and they went unratified.

²⁵ Rawls, *Indians of California*, 89-110. See also, George Harwood Philips, "Indians in Los Angeles, 1781-1875: Economic Integration and Social Disintegration," *Pacific Historical Review* 49 (August 1980), 427-51; Hurtado, *Indian Survival*, 129-31; Castillo, "Impact of Euro-American Exploration," 108-09.

²⁶ Rawls, *Indians of California*, 93.

Instead of occupying lands held in trust, Indians lived on temporary farms located throughout the state, but near areas dependent on agriculture. That way, farmers had a cheap labor pool close by, and a place to send the workers once they finished their jobs.²⁷ Still, many historians ended the history of California Indians in 1860. By 1860, racism and mechanization displaced Indian workers in the Central Valley. New immigrants were unaccustomed to Indian labor, disliked Indians, and introduced labor-saving machinery that displaced Indian workers.²⁸ While racism and mechanization reduced the need for Indians workers in the Sacramento Valley by 1860, Indians comprised a vital part of the agricultural workforce in other parts of the state. In fact, some northern California Indians only began to work in agricultural labor in the mid-1850s.

This dissertation strives to continue Hurtado's excellent work on California Indians. It begins in the mid-1850s, when California Indians left the Central Valley's workforce, but began to work in northern California. The first three chapters examine Indian labor from precontact to 1900. During this period,

²⁷ For Indian policy in California see, Hurtado, *Indian Survival*, 125-48; Findlay, "An Elusive Institution," 13-37.

²⁸ Hurtado, *Indian Survival*, 165-67.

Indians incorporated agricultural labor into their economy, participating in wage labor for their own purposes. Government officials debated the efficacy of labor in their mission to civilize Indians. At times, labor adequately served that purpose, but other times suggested it failed to assimilate Indians. White ranchers frequently discussed the apparent civilized state of Indians and used these definitions to subjugate Indians and appropriate Indian land. The next five chapters are topical and explore the economic, ceremonial, and social meanings behind Indian wage labor in the twentieth century. Government officials accepted Indians as a working class and attempted to provide proper training for their role as agricultural workers. Whites continued to marginalize Indians economically and socially. Finally, chapter nine sketches Charles Wright's life, and illuminates what a life of labor meant to individual Indians. Finally, an epilogue provides some conclusions and traces Round Valley's labor history from 1941 to 1990.

This story of Indian labor connects the histories of Indians in northern California with Indians in other parts of the country. Historians of American Indians are only beginning to understand the importance of wage labor

in the lives of American Indians.²⁹ This project seeks to contribute to and broaden that discussion. It also seeks to demonstrate similar experiences between Round Valley Indians and other working groups, including the intersection of race and labor, the development of institutions used to harness their labor, and resistance.³⁰

²⁹ For other studies of Indian labor see, Robert B. Campbell, "New Lands, Old Lands: Native American Labor, Agrarian Ideology, and the Progressive-Era State in the Making of the Newlands Reclamation Project, 1902-1926," *Pacific Historical Review* 72 (May 2002), 203-38; Colleen O'Neill, "The 'Making' of the Navajo Worker: Navajo Households, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and Off-Reservation Wage Work, 1948-1960," *New Mexico Historical Review* 74 (October 1999), 375-405; Alice Littlefield and Martha Knack, *Native Americans and Wage Labor: Ethnohistorical Perspectives*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996). Historians of Canadian Indians have also provided interesting works on Indian labor. See Rolf Knight, *Indians at Work: An Informal History of Native Indian Labour in British Columbia, 1858-1930* (Vancouver: New Star Books, 1978) and Charles Menzies and Caroline Butler, "Working in the Woods: Tsimshian Resource Workers and the Forest Industry of British Columbia," *American Indian Quarterly* 25 (Summer 2001), 409-30.

³⁰ Ira Berlin and Philip Morgan push labor to the forefront of their studies of American slavery. See especially Berlin and Morgan, eds., *Cultivation and Culture: Labor and the Shaping of Slave Life in the Americas* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1993), 1-45; Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone: The First Two Centuries of Slavery in North America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998); Morgan, *Slave Counterpoint: Black Culture in the Eighteenth-Century Chesapeake & Lowcountry* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998). Any historian of labor in the United States is indebted to the fine work of Herbert Gutman and David Montgomery. See, Gutman's classic essay cited above and Montgomery's *Workers' Control in America* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979) and *The Fall of the House of Labor* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

Chapter 1:
Contact and Labor in Round Valley, 1850-1880

Captain Weimar (Nisenan) gripped the agency's plow, and struggled to hold his grasp as the plow horse stumbled through the field. He made a few passes as other Indians intently watched. Unaccustomed to agricultural labor, the Yukis and Wailackis on the reservation needed Weimar's instruction before they worked behind the plow. Weimar then grabbed a bag of seeds and methodically sowed the field. Agricultural labor had arrived on the Round Valley Reservation.¹

The Yuki's and Wailacki's experience with Captain Weimar illustrated the changes accompanying Indian-white contact in northern California. Before the meeting of Euroamericans and Indians, California Indians practiced a gendered division of labor, hunted game, and harvested wild foods. While Indians traded certain surplus products, they oriented their economies toward achieving subsistence rather than for the market. In the mid-1850s, white fur trappers and government officials first appeared in Round Valley, introduced new labor techniques and set Indians on a path that would make them agricultural laborers. Each group in Round Valley

¹ *Alta California*, May 29, 1858, M234, 36: 825-826

invested agricultural labor with their own meanings. As their options narrowed, Indians resisted, adapted, and accommodated to the new world of work. These changes provided opportunities for some Indians, but posed dangers to all. The federal government hoped labor would civilize and control Indians. Finally, white ranchers employed Indians in an effort to amass personal fortunes. In their interactions, ranchers racially defined Indians. The different meanings and interpretations of Indian labor led each group into conflict with the other.

Studies of Indian-white contact in North America have been one of the most dynamic fields of historical study. Rather than considering American Indians speed bumps in the path of Western civilization, historians argue contact initiated a competition and struggle between cultural groups vying for dominance in North America. Successive waves of European diseases, traders, and settlers winnowed Indian populations, trapped Native American tribes in the market economy, and took most of the Indians' land. However, Indian and European

interactions created a Euroamerican "new world."² In northern California, the workplace is the best vantage to see the "new world." Here, Indians, government officials and ranchers interacted and created a mutually understandable world based in part on Indian labor.

Before the arrival of Europeans, California Indian tribes relied on a subsistence economy based on hunting and harvesting.³ In the past, anthropologists, historians, and architects of federal Indian policy depicted hunting and harvesting groups as the most primitive of all social organizations. Dating back to Jeffersonian America, people ranked hunting and harvesting societies at the bottom of discussions of

² See Richter, *Facing East from Indian Country*; Colin Calloway, *New Worlds for All: Indians, Europeans, and the Remaking of Early North America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998); James Merrell, *The Indians' New World: Catawbas and their Neighbors from European Contact through the Era of Removal* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1990); Alfred Crosby, *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993); James Axtell, *The Invasion Within: The Contest of Cultures in Colonial North America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985); Jennings, *Invasion of America*.

³ Native historians Rupert and Jeanette Costo object to the term "hunter-gatherer" and instead employ the phrase "hunter-harvester" because of the connotations the previous expression implies. They argue, "Native scholars as well as traditionalists who know their cultures have objected to the designation of 'gatherers,' although it appears in most of the literature to this day. Accepting the description of the material culture of California Indians, we suggest another description, that of 'Hunters-Harvesters.'" Harvesting suggests intent, purposeful action, and knowledge of the environment. See *The Missions of California: A Legacy of Genocide* (San Francisco: Indian Historian Press, 1987), 12.

social evolution.⁴ More recently, scholars, such as anthropologists Eric Wolf and Marshall Sahlins, argued hunting and harvesting groups possessed their own logic and assured subsistence, or enough food and supplies for basic survival.⁵ California Indians and other hunting and harvesting groups deployed their labor in complex ways, possessed an intimate knowledge of the natural environment, and manipulated the environment to maximize its potential.⁶ Rather than an inherently inferior mode of production, hunting and harvesting represented a successful adaptation to the surrounding environment and California Indians lived healthy lives. In fact, California's abundant wild game and natural plant life

⁴ For discussions of this hierarchy see Drew McCoy, *The Elusive Republic: Political Economy in Jeffersonian America* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1980), 19-20 and Hoxie, *A Final Promise*, 17-19.

⁵ Anthropologists have also attempted to study hunting and harvesting groups on their own terms. Eric Wolf, for instance, wrote, "[Kin-Ordered societies] are usually called 'primitive' in the anthropological literature. The term is misleading if it leads one to think of the Iroquois, Crow, or Lunda...as people who have not yet aspired to the heights of civilization." See *Europe and the People Without History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997, 1982), 88. For roots of the analytical framework applied to hunting and harvesting groups, see Marshall Sahlins, *Stone Age Economics* (Chicago: Aldine and Atherton, 1972), 3-10. For the subsistence ethic see, James Scott, *The Moral Economy of the Peasant* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979).

⁶ For an introduction to the ways California Indians manipulated their environment see, M. Kat Anderson, Michael G. Barbour, and Valerie Whitworth, "A World of Balance and Plenty: Land, Plants, Animals, and Humans in a Pre-European California," in *Contested Eden*, 14-18.

precluded the development of agriculture and centralized societies present in other parts of North America.⁷

In order to extract food sources from their respective environments, men and women divided their tasks and their combined talents assured community survival.⁸ Men hunted wild game, such as deer, elk, and a variety of smaller animals. In areas with abundant streams, men caught steelhead or salmon with weirs, nets, and spears.⁹ Fishing followed a seasonal round. In the fall, the Yuki fished for Black salmon, winter and spring salmon during those seasons, and trout and steelhead in the summer.¹⁰ Women sometimes assisted in these endeavors. Nomlacki and Concow women drove animals into traps and sometimes hunted for small game. Wailacki women accompanied men on communal hunts, butchered the slain animals and packed home the kill. Women cooperated

⁷ Colin Calloway, *First Peoples: A Documentary History of American Indian History* (Boston: Bedford-St. Martin's Press, 1999), 13-14.

⁸ The following discussion of pre-contact labor relies principally on Nona Willoughby, "Division of Labor among the Indians of California," in *California Indians*, Garland American Indian Ethnohistory Series, 6 vols. (New York, 1974), 2: 213-75. I follow Eric Wolf's discussion of kin-ordered societies in this section. See Wolf, *Europe and the People without History*, 88-99. See also Edith Wallace, "Gendered Status and Role Differences," in *California*, 683-84; Hurtado, *Indian Survival*, 18-19; Frank Essene, "Culture Elements Distributions: XXI Round Valley," *Anthropological Records*, 8 (1945), 7, 20-21; Virginia Miller, *Ukomno'M: The Yuki Indians of Northern California* (Socorro, NM: Ballena Press, 1979), 22-23.

⁹ For Indian hunting and fishing see, Willoughby, "Division of Labor," 223-30.

¹⁰ Foster, "Summary of Yuki Culture," 163.

in fishing excursions as well. They drove the fish into nets held by men or caught them in baskets when the fish ventured close to shore.¹¹

Women harvested wild plants, which contributed important items to the Indian diet. They gathered seeds, clover, nuts, tubers, berries, and acorns, the most important staple in California. As with hunting, harvesting wild foods required the cooperation of men and women. Male participation peaked in the fall, when the tribes needed to harvest the year's supply of acorns before they rotted. Men climbed oak tress and shook the acorns off the limbs, thus allowing women and children to harvest the yearly crop.¹² Young and old, male and female cooperated to harvest the annual acorn crop.

Men and women also divided their domestic and household chores. Men built dwellings, drew water, and made clothing. Further, Wailacki and Nisenan men cooked meat dishes. Women processed the food items that they had harvested (including drying, storing, and grinding foods), leached and sifted acorn flour, and cooked their items.¹³ Men and women manufactured the items they used daily. Men made items such as fishing nets and bows,

¹¹ Willoughby, "Division of Labor," 223-30.

¹² Ibid., 231-37.

¹³ Ibid., 238-43.

while women created baskets and digging implements. Some men and women honed their skills, and village members considered them craft specialists. Villages had their own arrow and bow makers, but many craft specialists still had to hunt and fish for their livelihood.¹⁴

While California Indians practiced what anthropologist Nona Willoughby called "cooperative assistance" in labor, they maintained separate gender spheres. California Indian women represented neither "squaw drudges" nor forerunners of modern feminism. Both arguments fail to study Native American women and their labor on their own terms.¹⁵ When women helped hunt or fish, they did so in prescribed ways. They drove game to men who held nets or used their own tools (baskets) to fish. Thus, women used an instrument made by women to perform men's work. The instruments, level of

¹⁴ Ibid., 244-60.

¹⁵ European explorers degraded both Indian men and women by calling the latter "squaw drudges." Since Indian women performed the agricultural work in most Native American societies, Europeans concluded that Indian men were lazy and oppressed their wives because women performed all of the work. Hunting was a leisure activity confined to European elites - not an economic necessity as it was in pre-Columbian North America - and European men were farmers. This view shifted as some feminist scholars compared Indian women to their European counterparts. They concluded that the former were freer than the latter, and in the process, idealized Native American gender roles. For an example of the "squaw drudge" stereotype see, Axtell, *Invasion Within*, 152-53. For an overview of this literature and call for a new perspective see, Sarah Eppler-Janda, "The Intersection of Feminism and Indianness in the Activism of LaDonna Harris and Wilma Mankiller" Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Oklahoma, 2002.

cooperation and food preparation suggests California Indians maintained more rigid labor divisions than some have earlier suggested.

In addition to a gendered division of labor, California Indians practiced cooperation, reciprocity, and redistribution of economic resources. Yuki families, for instance, went on fishing expeditions and then shared the catch.¹⁶ When the Yuki hunted deer in groups, the killer kept the best pieces, and then gave the other parts to his friends.¹⁷ Tribelet leaders redistributed food and other resources among village members, especially at ceremonial times.¹⁸

The geographic size of California and the diversity of the state's Indian population complicates California Indian history. California contained more than 100 different language groups and 300,000 people before the arrival of Europeans. Furthermore, Europeans haphazardly explored and settled the state. By the 19th century, Spanish settlers reached only as far as the San Francisco Bay, while Russian fur traders patrolled parts of the

¹⁶ Foster, "Summary of Yuki Culture," 164.

¹⁷ Ibid., 162.

¹⁸ Essene, "Culture Element Distributions," 39.

northwest coast and American fur traders and settlers occupied the central valley.¹⁹

Until the mid-1850s, the Indians who would inhabit the Round Valley Reservation had varying contact experiences with Euroamericans and their labor arrangements. The Atsugewi, Nomlacki, Concow, and Nisenan encountered the fringes of Spanish settlement, American fur traders, and Sutter's colony near Sacramento. In fact, Sutter drew some of his labor force from the Concow and Nisenan. In 1854, government agents moved the Nomlacki to the Nome Lackee Farm in Colusa County. Pomos worked at Fort Ross, Vallejo's ranch and Mission San Rafael. Yuki and Wailacki, however, first met American trappers in the mid-1850s.²⁰

In 1854, the first Americans recorded their visit to Round Valley, though Indians tell of earlier visitors. According to a Yuki story, a blonde-haired, blue-eyed man rode into the valley on horseback. The Yuki had never seen horses or a fair-haired man before, and pressed around the visitor. He panicked and shot three Yukis with his gun. Curiosity turned into anger as the Yuki shot the man and his horse with arrows and buried the

¹⁹ William S. Simmons, "Indian Peoples of California," in *Contested Eden*, 49-50.

²⁰ Hurtado, *Indian Survival*, 47-124, passim; *California*, 194-95, 243, 249, 299, 342, 385, and 396.

corpses under rocks.²¹ According to written sources, Pierce and Frank Asbill accompanied a group of men who hoped to find a trade route between Weaverville and Sonoma County.²² After they entered the valley, the white men startled Yukis in the valley and killed some of them. The Asbill brothers left the valley, but remembered Round Valley and its Indian population.

In spring 1855, the Asbill brothers made a deal with a Spanish landowner who lived near Red Bluff. The Asbills agreed to furnish Indian women to the Spaniard in exchange for horses. The Asbills returned to Round Valley and spent the summer hunting deer and luring Indian girls to their camp with beans and syrup. The Asbills captured an Indian boy, whom they named Buckshot, and offered him a gun if he promised to keep the girls around the camp. In the fall, the Asbills left Round Valley with 1,500 pounds of buckskin and 35 Indian girls. They met their contact, and exchanged the girls for 105 horses. Years later, Frank Asbill defended his father's and uncle's actions,

Many people of today might judge these
barbarians as slave traders, trafficking in

²¹ *The Press Democrat*, January 15, 1950, Assorted Newspaper Clippings, folder: Round Valley, Held-Poage Memorial Home and Research Library, Ukiah, CA.

²² For the account of the Asbills see Frank Asbill and Argle Shawley, *The Last of the West* (New York: Carlton Press, 1975), 17-44.

human beings.... But the wild Wylackie women were slaves for the big, fat, lazy Indian bucks they lived with.... These Missourians were not cruel slave traders taking a band of Pocahontases over the mountains to trade them to the wicked Spanish, or the greasers. They were doing a humanitarian thing, for these women, although it was not done from an humanitarian standpoint.²³

Asbill's defense misread both the Indian culture from which the Asbills took the girls, and the girls' new lives. Indian men and women worked together to secure food, and the Spanish probably treated the girls far worse than had they remained with their people. The Indians girls worked as domestic servants and were vulnerable to sexual harassment.²⁴ Furthermore, California Indian and European slavery differed. The Hupa and Karuk, for instance, raided other tribes for slaves, and the Yuki and Wailacki may have been accustomed to raids before the Asbills' arrival. California Indians embedded slavery in considerations of kinship and ceremony. Tribes allowed captives to return to their people, through either negotiation or escape,

²³ Asbill and Shawley, *Last of the West*, 43-44.

²⁴ For the experience of Indian captives see Rawls, *Indians of California*, 95-100.

whereas the Yuki girls never returned to Round Valley.²⁵ Market forces, rather than ceremony, lay behind the Asbills' actions. The Asbills wanted a profit from their transactions. Given the differences between Indian and white forced labor, Asbill's defense of his relatives is weak and apologetic.

In June 1856, the federal government made its first official appearance in Round Valley. Simmon Storms, an employee at the Nome Lackee Farm, traveled to Round Valley at the behest of superintendent Thomas J. Henley - who had made an unofficial trip to Round Valley in 1854 with cattle rancher George White - and considered Round Valley the perfect place for an Indian reservation. He called the new Indian farm "Nome Cult," apparently a mispronunciation of the Nomlacki word "nome kelch."²⁶ Storms stated the rugged terrain and isolation would deter white settlement and provide ample time to civilize Indians. Storms planned to spread the benefits of

²⁵ Lowell Jean Bean, "Social Organization in Native California," in *Native Californians: A Theoretical Retrospective* (Menlo Park: Ballena Press, 1976), 118. James Brooks' recent study of slavery, kinship, and Indians in the American Southwest provides new insight into Indian and Euroamerican forms of captivity. See *Captives & Cousins: Slavery, Kinship, and Community in the Southwest Borderlands* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002).

²⁶ Frank Asbill writes, "George E. White, a Virginian and first cousin of the famous Stonewall Jackson of Civil War fame, arrived in the valley just three days after the Missourians had gone through [in 1854]. With White were two men, Boring and Henley." Asbill, *Last of the West*, 41.

laboring for whites to Round Valley's indigenous population. He gathered the Yuki and informed their chief, "I was sent over by the great Captain to see them and have a talk with them and to settle among them and to teach them how to work."²⁷ Labor, Indian officials believed, domesticated Indians and provided an alternative to the policy of extermination. Historian Albert Hurtado explains agents assumed "Indians who worked for whites were surely on their way up the ladder of civilization, or at least on the bottom rung..."²⁸

Besides uplifting Indians, Storms acknowledged the survival of the new Indian farm depended on his ability to persuade Indians to work. After Storms returned to Nome Lackee, the Yuki provided food for the government officials who stayed behind. He also estimated Indians could build a road connecting the new Indian farm with Nome Lackee in a few weeks. After they finished that task, Indians could build houses, fences, and other buildings necessary for the Indian Farm to function.²⁹

²⁷ S.P. Storms to George Henley, June 20, 1856, M234, 35: 474.

²⁸ Hurtado, *Indian Survival*, 149.

²⁹ S.P. Storms to George Henley, June 20, 1856, M234, 35: 473, 476. At the early stages of contact, Europeans relied on Native American labor for their survival. See Weber, *Spanish Frontier*, 124; Martin Quitt, "Trade and Acculturation in Jamestown, 1607-1609: The Limits of Understanding," *William and Mary Quarterly* 52 (April 1995), 227-58.

From the outset, Yukis understood their bargaining power and demanded payment for their labor. They agreed to work for the government in return for protection from other whites. Yuki chiefs complained white men had abducted Indian women and children before Storms arrived, and they asked the government to protect them.³⁰ Yukis saw an advantage from working for the government, which they hoped would protect women and children from unscrupulous Indian slavers, like the Asbills.

Government settlement of Round Valley proceeded quickly and ordered the removal of central valley Indians. Between June 1856 and September 1857, Storms brought about 200 Nisenans and Atsugewis from Nome Lackee to Nome Cult.³¹ Government officials took Indians from Nome Lackee for numerous reasons. First, Round Valley Indians resisted the presence of whites and foreign Indians. Some Yukis and Wailackis resented the arrival of white and Indian workers, and attempted to deter settlement. In July 1856, mountain Indians drove off

³⁰ S.P. Storms to George Henley, June 20, 1856, M234, 35: 475.

³¹ T.J. Henley to J.W. Denver, September 28, 1857, M234, 35: 1278. In this letter, Henley called the Indians the Hat Creeks and the Nevadas. Anthropologist T.R. Garth and historian Edward Castillo explain Hat Creek referred to the Atsugewi (*California*, 111, 243). Government officials referred to the Indians accompanying Storms as the Nevadas. According to historian Albert Hurtado, Storms represented the Nisenan on several occasions and had a good relationship with the tribe (*Indian Survival*, 145-46).

wild game and hoped whites understood their message.³² In addition to scaring away deer, Indian workers ran away from the reservation. On August 10, 1856, Storms reported "about 20 Indians ran off" and no one found them.³³ Until the twentieth century, Indians left the reservation in protest to the living and working conditions. The mountains surrounding Round Valley provided a refuge for Indians for years. In the 1850s, it offered a location from which they could launch attacks on the reservation's food sources, and a way to evade Indian officials who tracked absconding Indians. Thus, the arrival of central valley Indians supplemented a depleted workforce.

Central Valley Indians brought their knowledge and experience working for whites. Indians worked on new jobs and modified indigenous practices to meet the demands of their employers. They harvested hay, built corrals, and erected houses. Others supplied food for the government employees. Indian women gathered berries while Indian men and boys hunted deer and dried venison.³⁴ Until the end of the Civil War, Indians performed the

³² Report of Labor at Nome Cult Valley, July 21 to August 10, 1856, M234, 35: 613.

³³ Ibid, 615. Historian Steven Hackel describes a similar situation in Spanish missions, "Large-scale exoduses occasionally decimated a mission's workforce, but more common, especially in the later years of the mission period, was slow attrition." See "Land, Labor, and Production," 124.

³⁴ Report of Labor at Nome Cult Valley, July 21 to August 10, 1856, M234, 35: 612-615.

essential jobs on the farm. Indian workers built houses for Indian and white workers, a ten-foot high picket fence surrounding those houses, a storehouse, corrals, planted crops and tended livestock.³⁵ Removed Indians played a critical role in introducing new labor patterns to the valley. Two Nisenan captains - Weimar and Weisicher - policed the distribution of rations and taught farm skills. A reporter for the *Alta California* observed, "yesterday I observed [Weimar] instructing his copper colored laborers in *modus operandi* of planting corn, and was much amused at the pompous dignity with which he strutted through the furrows, scattering the yellow kernels with mathematical precision."³⁶ Indian workers blended old and new labor patterns in northern California. Experienced Nisenans toiled alongside novice Yukis as they built homes for government employees, and gathered indigenous food sources.

During the winter of 1856, Yukis and the government clashed over the expropriation of their labor. Angry Yukis surrounded the Nome Cult Farm, killed livestock, and threatened to kill all the white men and Nisenan

³⁵ Thomas J. Henley to Charles E. Mix, March 3, 1858, M234, 36: 699-701; Extract from a Letter from S.P. Storms, Farmer at Nome Cult, to Thomas J. Henley, [n.d.], M234, 36: 719-720; S.P. Storms to Goddard Bailey, August 14, 1858, M234, 36: 581; Examination of S.P. Storms, August 11, 1858, M234, 36: 300.

³⁶ *Alta California*, May 29, 1858, M234, 36: 825-826.

workers. Storms and his party shot and killed a number of the harassing Yuki.³⁷ The arrangement - Indian labor for government protection - fell apart as hastily as Storms and the Yuki made it. The growing white and Indian population in Round Valley taxed Yuki food stores, and they chose to drive out the intruders.

The removed Indians also experienced taxing demands on their labor. During the first year, some of the Nisenans arrived as human pack animals. Nisenans carried farming tools, seeds, and provisions to the new Indian farm on their backs. The winter of 1856 set in earlier than expected and snow covered the mountain passes between Nome Lackee and Nome Cult. Nevertheless, Storms pushed the Nisenan burden bearers to cross the dangerous mountains whenever the weather broke. The Nisenans carried fifty-pound packs and wore little or no clothing on their excursions. Storms testified only three Nisenan died while provisioning Nome Cult, but fellow Indian Office employee Benjamin Arthur estimated Indian losses at 300.³⁸ Indians quickly understood working for whites - whether for the government or white settlers - imperiled them.

³⁷ S.P. Storms to Goddard Bailey, August 14, 1858, M234, 36: 581.

³⁸ "History of Nome Cult or Round Valley, Calif.," CHMP, 14: 493; Deposition of Benjamin Arthur, February 28, 1860, IWP, F2753: 468.

In most correspondence, government officials ignored Indian resistance, and emphasized the reservation's progress. Henley reported some Indians killed livestock and ran away, but more importantly, the Indian farm workers planted crops and erected most of the agency's buildings.³⁹ One month later, Henley raved, "There is no late trouble among the wild Indians and in the valley they are performing their work cheerfully."⁴⁰ Even J. Ross Browne, who investigated allegations of corruption against Henley and his associates in California, found the crops and fences in good condition.⁴¹ In 1861, new superintendent George Hanson stated, "[The Reservation Indians] appear to labor cheerfully with almost no want but food, clothing, and tobacco." Even the recalcitrant Wailackis zealously adopted reservation labor, "[The Wailackis] went to work with a will and are highly pleased with the prospects of food for the winter."⁴² According to government accounts, the Nome Cult Farm represented a rare nugget in an otherwise muddy stream of

³⁹ T.J. Henley to J.W. Denver, October 27, 1857, M234, 35: 1325-1328.

⁴⁰ T.J. Henley to J.W. Denver, November 30, 1857, M234, 35: 1457.

⁴¹ Report of J. Ross Browne, Special Agent in Relation to Indian Affairs in California, September 4, 1858, 1857, M234, 36: 196.

⁴² T.J. Henley to J.W. Denver, November 30, 1857, M234, 35: 1457; George Hanson to William Dole, July 15, 1861, M234, 38: 155; Austin Wiley to William Dole, October 5, 1864, M234, 39: 1211-14. See also Battailles Deposition, February 28, 1860; Burgess Deposition, July 28, 1860; Edward Dillon to Maj. W.W. Mackall, May 16, 1860, M234, 37: 1198; A.G. Tassin, "Chronicles of Camp Wright: Part I," *Overland Monthly* 10 (July 1887), 32.

California Indian Affairs. Indians appeared happy, content, and willing to work.

Government officials praised Indian labor because they believed it helped whites control the Indian population. "To keep Indians quiet and passive," Storms told government inspector Goddard Bailey, "they should have abundance of occupation, and this can always be done on a Reserve where improvements should be constantly made. When Indians are unoccupied, they are always plotting mischief."⁴³ With this in mind, Storms proposed planting flax and hemp, increasing the reservation's sheep herd, and teaching Indian women how to make clothing. While Indian women toiled in textiles, Storms proposed promoting self-advancement among Indian men, "It would be well to give the Indians some idea of personal property that those who labor might feel that they were deserving individual benefits from their exertions."⁴⁴ Storms believed idle Indians posed dangers to whites. They required the instruction and care from white officials, who kept them out of trouble and promoted American values. Under the care and direction of white overseers, labor would civilize the Indians.

⁴³ S.P. Storms to Goddard Bailey, August 14, 1858, M234, 36: 584.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 584, 588-89. Hemp still grows in Round Valley's mountains.

Other Indian Office officials agreed on the usefulness of labor in their mission to civilize Indians. In fall 1858, Bailey argued labor separated civilized Indians from savage ones, "The Yubas and Nevadas here, like those of the same tribes at Nome Lackee, have some little knowledge of Agriculture, and seem to possess some intelligence." Bailey continued, "The Yukas and other wild tribes are mere savages, the most degraded specimens of humanity I ever saw."⁴⁵ The government employees' racial prejudices filtered into the assessment of Indians. Labor and agriculture represented an improvement from the barbaric state in which many Americans believed Indians lived before contact. Government officials considered the Yuki and Wailacki inferior to the Indians who had acquired agricultural knowledge. The future of all Indians, agents hoped, lay in some form of agriculture.

Underneath positive descriptions of Indian labor lay corruption in California Indian affairs. J. Ross Browne found numerous indiscretions in his investigation into Henley's administration of Nome Cult and other California reservations. Henley used Indian farms - including Nome

⁴⁵ Goddard Bailey to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, November 4, 1858, M234, 36: 560.

Cult - to enhance his personal fortune. In Round Valley, Henley and Storms used Indian labor and government resources to create private ranches and farms. Captain C.D. Douglas reported, "the house and barn and all improvements up the Storms place was made by the white employees and the Indians from the reservation, and that such material, such as windows, nails, locks, &c., for the house, nails for barn, &c., were taken from the reservation; that he understood the lumber used in building the barn and house was reservation lumber, procured for the purpose of building granaries on the reservation, and that the cost of the house and barn were understood to be about five thousand (\$5,000) dollars."⁴⁶ Even though Henley attempted to defend his actions, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs fired him in 1858.⁴⁷ Henley and Storms provided positive reports from Nome Cult in order to avoid an investigation by the Office of Indian Affairs.

While government officials believed labor assimilated Indians, Indians worked on the reservation

⁴⁶ "Condition of the Indian Tribes," *Report of the Joint Special Committee, Appointed under Joint Resolution of March 3, 1865, with an Appendix* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1867), 506. See also See Findlay, "An Elusive Institution," 26; Hurtado, *Indian Survival*, 148; Castillo, "Impact of Euro-American Exploration," 110, 112.

⁴⁷ Thomas J. Henley to James William Denver, August 2, 1857, JWDP, box 1, folder: 2.

for pragmatic reasons. Agents distributed rations of food, clothing, and other items to Indian workers. Storms told federal investigators, "I was provided with clothing and provisions sufficient for all and therefore I divided what I had among those I thought the most deserving and worked."⁴⁸ Indian workers received a paltry ration of six ears of corn - two in the morning, two at noon, and two at night. In contrast, Storms fed non-working Indians only two or three times per week.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Simmon P. Storms Deposition, February 26, 1860, IWP, F2753: 447.

⁴⁹ Examination of S.P. Storms, August 11, 1858, M234, 36: 297-301; J.W. Burgess Deposition, July 28, 1860, IWP, F2753: 469; W.J. Hildreth Deposition, February 25, 1860 IWP, F2753: 443; George Rees Deposition, February 27, 1860, IWP, F2753: 455.



Figure 1.1: Indians and agents in Round Valley, circa 1858. Fourth man from left is Simon Storms. Photo courtesy Held-Poage Memorial Home and Research Library, Ukiah Ca.

In addition to food and clothing, Indian workers received the best living quarters. An *Alta California* reporter wrote, "On approaching the settlement, a dozen or more substantial cabins is seen, each of which is occupied in the winter season by one or more Indian families of the 'upper ten' or 'workers,' which entitle them to that dignified rank amongst their fellows."⁵⁰ Reservation labor provided an opportunity for Indians to survive in California. Against the backdrop of violence, coercion, and deprivation that characterized California

⁵⁰ *Alta California*, May 29, 1858, M234, 36: 825.

Indian history in the mid-nineteenth century, Indians secured clothing, food, and housing through agency labor.

While Indian workers reaped some benefits from their labor, they faced constant dangers working on the reservation. After the Commissioner of Indian Affairs removed Henley, reservation conditions deteriorated. After 1858, the United States cut expenditures for California Indians, and Indian food supplies depended on the administration of local Indian agents. In 1860, under George Rees, the agent who replaced Storms, Indians planted 200 acres of wheat and rye.⁵¹ However, conditions worsened under Rees' successor, James Short. In 1862, Short supervised the planting of only 60 acres of wheat and prevented Indians from working on the agency farm. Apparently, Short fell in love with an Indian woman and completely neglected his duties.⁵² Reservation conditions and the amount of work Indians accomplished varied with the abilities and inclinations of the Indian agent. As a result, Indians faced constant shortages of food throughout the era.

In addition to declining food supplies, violent whites harassed Indian workers. In February 1859, Harry

⁵¹ George Rees Deposition, February 27, 1860, IWP, F2753: 455.

⁵² Capt. C.D. Douglas to Lieut. Col. R.C. Drum, December 23, 1862, OR, 50 2: 262, 264.

Bryzandine attacked an Indian worker on the Farm. The Indian had worked for Bryzandine the month before, and when Bryzandine came on the reservation, the two exchanged words. The Indian had been skinning an ox at the time of Bryzandine's arrival and had a knife in his hand. Bryzandine used the Indians' weapon as a pretext to beat him with a stick. The military stationed in Round Valley arrested Bryzandine, but he escaped from the prison.⁵³ Later, whites abducted an Indian worker named Bob from the reservation, shot him and then cut his throat.⁵⁴ These examples demonstrate the meetings between whites and Indian workers could be violent and deadly.

Indians resisted poor living conditions and white violence. In November 1858, Yukis fled from the reservation to the mountains in order to protect themselves from whites.⁵⁵ In August 1859, white settlers threatened the Nisenans and most returned to their homeland. Only 25 of 200 Nisenan remained in Round Valley.⁵⁶

In an effort to ameliorate their food situation, Indians turned to livestock. In July 1858, Indian

⁵³ G.W. Henley to T.J. Henley, February 12, 1859, M234, 37: 318-21; S.P. Storms to T.J. Henley, February 15, 1859, M234, 37: 328-29.

⁵⁴ Laurence Battailes Deposition, February 28, 1860, F2753: 462.

⁵⁵ S.P. Storms to T.J. Henley, November 23, 1858, M234, 36: 987-88.

⁵⁶ Vincent Geiger to A.B. Greenwood, August 20, 1859, M234, 37: 545-547.

workers allegedly killed eight to ten hogs that belonged to John Lawson, a white farmer. The following month, Captain Weimar and Buckaroo Sam killed an ox that belonged to Iassac Shannon, another white farmer.⁵⁷

Indians targeted hogs and cattle because they provided food for Indians and consumed the customary staples of the Indians' diet - acorns and grasses. Whites responded viciously to the death of livestock. They hunted down Indians and attacked entire villages, sometimes killing women and children. The ranchers' retribution may have had more to do with their perceptions of civilization than the loss of their animals, as historian Jill LePore explains in her study of colonial New England. Americans linked their identity to property ownership. Barns, livestock, and houses represented the line separating "civilized" whites from "savage" Indians. When Indians killed livestock and property, they breached the line separating Indians from whites, and whites retaliated, ironically, with savage cruelty.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ Hildreth Deposition, February 25, 1860; Iassac Shannon Deposition, July 28, 1860, IWP, F2753: 467.

⁵⁸ Jill LePore, *The Name of War: King Philip's War and the Origins of American Identity* (New York: Vintage Books, 1998), 71-96. On the importance of private property in the American West, historian Patricia Nelson Limerick writes, "White Americans saw the acquisition of property as a cultural imperative, manifestly the right way to go about things." See *Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1987), 55.

As Indians killed more livestock, and whites retaliated, Indians fled the reservation and took their labor with them. Storms complained, "Of late the Indians in the valley and those in the mountains have been killing much stock, and for the last two weeks we could hardly get Yukas (wild Indians) enough to do the work, as so many had retreated to the hills."⁵⁹ In the 1860s, Indians continued to escape from the reservation. On September 24, 1862, the Concow chief Tome-ya-nem led 500 Concows and Atsugewi off the reservation and returned to the Sacramento Valley.⁶⁰ White settlers threatened to kill the Indians and claimed that the government had abandoned the reservation. The following spring, the military returned the Concows and Hat Creeks to the reservation, but at a high cost of life.⁶¹ At the end of the Civil War, the military had moved Trinity Indians

⁵⁹ S.P. Storms to T.J. Henley, November 23, 1858, M234, 36: 987.

⁶⁰ It is possible that Tassin's informant in this case - Tome-ya-nem - was George Burchard. On the 1880 special census, Burchard's Concow name is listed as "Toom-ya-ne." See 1880 MS Census.

⁶¹ For the Concows leaving Round Valley and their return see James Short to George Hanson, September 25, 1862, OR, 50, 2: 163; *Marysville Daily Appeal*, September 30, 1862, CHMP, 98: 481; George Hanson to Brig. Gen. G. Wright, October 9, 1862, OR, 50, 2: 161; Francis Lippett to Lieut. Col. R.C. Drum, October 13, 1862, OR, 50, 2: 169; George Hanson to William Dole, October 15, 1862, M234, 38: 634; George Hanson to William Dole, November 1, 1862, OR, 50, 2: 199; Augustus W. Starr to Lieutenant Colonel Hooker, September 25, 1863, OR, 50, 2: 635-36; Capt. Charles Douglas to Lieut. Col. R.C. Drum, September 27, 1863, OR, 50, 2: 629; James Short to William Dole, May 15, 1864, M234, 39: 1090-91; "Indians Leaving the Round Valley Reservation," CHMP, 14: 496; A.G. Tassin, "Chronicles of Camp Wright: Part II," *Overland Monthly* 10 (August 1887), 184.

from Fort Humboldt to Round Valley, but four years later, many fled the reservation and returned to the Fort Humboldt area.⁶² Since the federal government failed to protect and feed Indians, Indians took their survival in their own hands.

When killing livestock and running away failed to solve their problems, Indians began working off the reservation. Of course, some Indians lacked choices when it concerned off reservation labor. Into the 1860s, white men captured Indian women and children, and either sold them or kept them as domestic servants. Indian agents, state superintendents, and valley residents routinely observed white men abducting Indian women.⁶³ Agent George Rees complained white men had captured two Nisenan women, and made them sew clothing. He found them in the home of Mr. Wilsey, and brought the women back to the farm. Rees explained, "To punish the squaws we locked them up in a ware house locked with a padlock on the outside. I think we had them locked a day and a

⁶² Charles Maltby to D.W. Cooley, May 28, 1866, M234, 41: 515.

⁶³ For agent's observations of abductions of Indian women see, S.P. Storms to T.J. Henley, June 20, 1856, M234, 35: 474; Burgess Deposition, July 28, 1860; Rees Deposition, February 27, 1860; Hanson to Dole, July 15, 1861, M234, 38: M234, 38: 152-57; Capt. C.D. Douglas to R.C. Drum, December 23, 1862, OR, 50, 2: 263; Tassin, "Chronicles of Camp Wright: Part I," 31; Tassin, "Chronicles of Camp Wright: Part II," 172.

night...."⁶⁴ The following day, someone broke the lock and the women escaped. Rees found one of the women with Wilsey, but the other disappeared. He concluded, "They are tolerably good looking. They appear to be contented on the Reservation."⁶⁵ Interestingly, agents curtailed the freedom of *Indian women* in order to protect them on the California frontier.

Stories of abductions are common in Round Valley's oral history. June Lozinto related, "That old man, he was a white man, kind of a rich old guy. He got my...Grandma Susie. We never did find out her...maiden name."⁶⁶ Ernestine Ray had a similar story. Wailacki Tom found Ray's grandmother, Elisa Crane, living with a white family, "the old people, they used to pierce their ears...with pine needles, and when they went to pierce Granma's ear, they dew-lapped her... That's how [Wailacki Tom] knew her. So he rode back to camp, and they stole her back." Afterwards, Crane's relatives hid her whenever whites came to camp. Crane, though, carried the reminders of her abduction for the rest of her life, "They treated Grandma pretty bad.... She had scars on her back," Lozinto recalled. "Mom, she used to cry..., [s]he

⁶⁴ Rees Deposition, February 27, 1860.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ June Lozinto interview by Les Lincoln, 4/90, RVOHP.

say, 'My poor mother died with scars on her back. They beat her.'"⁶⁷ White men targeted Indian women because only three white women lived in Round Valley in 1860. Indian women provided companionship, domestic service, and sex.⁶⁸ Most Indian-white relationships lasted a short time, and white men cast aside Indian mates when white women came to the area.⁶⁹

White men also targeted Indian children. Superintendent George Hanson described, "kidnappers follow at the heels of the soldiers to seize the children when their parents are murdered."⁷⁰ White men abducted Indian children and sold them outside the valley. An Indian slaver received anywhere from \$50 to \$200 for an Indian child. Children worked as domestic servants, livestock herders, and agricultural workers in their new homes.⁷¹ It is quite difficult to gauge the impact of the

⁶⁷ Ernestine Ray interview by Les Lincoln, 4/90, RVOHP.

⁶⁸ Hanson to Dole, July 15, 1861, M234, 38: 152.

⁶⁹ The literature on Native American women is extensive. I relied on the work of Albert Hurtado, especially *Indian Survival*, 169-82; "When Strangers Met: Sex and Gender on Three Frontiers," in *Writing the Range: Race, Class, and Culture in the Women's West*, eds. Elizabeth Jameson & Susan Armitage (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997), 134-37; and *Intimate Frontiers: Sex, Gender, and Culture in Old California* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1999), 86-90.

⁷⁰ George Hanson to William Dole, July 15, 1861, M234, 38: 157.

⁷¹ For examples of children abducted in Round Valley see, Storms to Henley, June 20, 1856, M234, 35: 474; Batailles Deposition, February 28, 1860; Hanson to Dole, July 15, 1861, M234, 38: 156-57; George Hanson to Charles Mix, July 23, 1861, M234, 38: 141; George Hanson to George Wright, November 11, 1862, OR, 50, 2: 219. For the experiences of indentured Indian children see, Rawls, *Indians of California*, 87-105.

Indian slave trade on the Round Valley population or anywhere else in California. Historian Edward Castillo estimates whites indentured and enslaved more than 4,000 Indians.⁷² In the aftermath of the Civil War, the Thirteenth Amendment nullified the indenture law, but Indian slavery still existed in California.⁷³

Some Indians whom whites abducted stayed in the valley. Laurence Batailles reported, "I have heard of parties residing in this valley say that they have gone in to the mountains and taken Indians, brought them to stay with them, and from circumstances, I believe it was done without the consent of the Indians."⁷⁴ George Jeffriss, the agency physician, concurred, "It is a very common occurrence here that when men want work hands to go to any rancheria in the vicinity or in the foot hills, and take the Indians and put them to work." Jeffriss, though, acknowledged, "in some cases there may be inducements offered to the Indians."⁷⁵ Whether Indians came willingly or whites forced them to work, Indian labor contributed to the growth of Round Valley's

⁷² Castillo, "Impact of Euro-American Exploration," 109.

⁷³ This issue is one that sparked considerable debate. Edward Castillo argues that the law abated in 1867, when California struck down the law in response to the passage of the Thirteenth Amendment. "Impact of Euro-American Exploration," 109.

⁷⁴ Batailles Deposition, February 28, 1860.

⁷⁵ George Jeffriss Deposition, February 28, 1860, IWP, F2753: 466.

agricultural economy. Besides the duties that Indian women and children performed, Indian men worked on ranches and farms, and freighted goods for white farmers.⁷⁶

Much like reservation labor, off-reservation labor solved few of the problems Indians faced. The level of protection and the treatment workers received depended on the rancher. Batailles observed, "I believe some of the Indians living with the settlers are better provided for than if they were on the reservation and some are not."⁷⁷ The degree of protection stemmed from the intersection of race, paternalism and labor. Many of Round Valley's first settlers came from the South or border states, voted for the Democratic Party, and carried ideas about race and labor westward.⁷⁸ It seems likely that these men, accustomed to people of color laboring under the direction of whites, transplanted ideas from their homelands to northern California. Indians replaced blacks; the Act to Govern and Protect the Indians

⁷⁶ For Indian farm labor see, Hanson to Dole, July 15, 1861, M234, 38: 152; Hanson to Mix, July 23, 1861, M234, 38: 144; George Hanson to Brig. General George Wright, October 10, 1862, OR, 50, 2: 163. For Indian domestic service see, Benjamin Arthur Deposition, February 28, 1860, IWP, F2753: 468; Hanson to Mix, July 23, 1861, M234, 38: 144. For Indian freighting and the problems with Thomas J. Henley see Rees Deposition, February 27, 1860.

⁷⁷ Batailles Deposition, February 28, 1860.

⁷⁸ For settlers in Round Valley see, Lyman Palmer, *History of Mendocino County, California* (San Francisco: Alley, Bowen, 1880), 595-609.

replaced the Slave Laws; and cattle ranches replaced plantations.

As in the South, a paternalistic relationship emerged between ranch owners and their Indian workers. Whites expected loyalty and good service from Indians. H.L. Hall stated, "In December 1858, my Indians told me that one mare had been killed... During that fall over one hundred Indians came in and camped near my cabin. As far as I know these Indians are peaceful and these are the ones I mean by my Indians."⁷⁹ Hall's comments illustrated whites expected information on the actions of untrustworthy Indians, and assumed they owned Indian workers. White ranchers, like Southern slave masters, considered Indian workers docile and tractable. They referred to the Indians who worked on white ranches as "pets."⁸⁰

These men seldom understood the meanings Indians placed in these relationships. Indians emphasized reciprocity in labor relations. In return for loyal service, Indians demanded protection from marauding white

⁷⁹ H.L. Hall Deposition, February 20, 1860, IWP, F2753: 449. For paternalism see, Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll*, esp. 3-7.

⁸⁰ See, for example, Partial Transcript of Historical Events of Round Valley by Elijah Potter, folder: Round Valley, Held-Poage Memorial Home and Research Library, Ukiah, CA. (hereafter Potter Manuscript).

militia organizations in northern California.⁸¹ In some cases, farmers literally saved the lives of their native workers. On January 1, 1859, a group of drunken white settlers came to the ranch of Iassac Shannon and demanded that he turn over some Indians for the group to kill. Shannon refused, telling the mob "I wanted my Indians to work for me." Rather than a humanitarian impulse, self-interest motivated Shannon to protect his workers. He made few efforts to prevent the mob from killing Indians on Lawson's and Bourne's ranches.⁸² Later that year, the Indians on Shannon's ranch experienced the wrath of the notorious volunteer militia. Captain Jarboe's Rangers killed two Indians and wounded an Indian woman on Shannon's ranch. Another Indian woman fled after the attack because she feared for her life.⁸³

The work environment on other ranches contradicted the paternalism some ranchers espoused. White employers could be as violent as raiding whites. A military officer stationed in Round Valley observed, "These Indians are worked and packed, and but scantily, if at

⁸¹ See Linda Pitelka, "Mendocino: Race Relations in a Northern California County," Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, 1994).

⁸² Shannon Deposition, July 28, 1860; Tassin, "Chronicles of Camp Wright: Part I," 28.

⁸³ Shannon Deposition, July 28, 1860.

all, clothed and fed..."⁸⁴ Benjamin Arthur admitted he killed an Indian servant because he suspected him of theft.⁸⁵ Indian oral history reveals when white ranchers forced Indians to build a wooden fence in the valley, the project's overseer whipped an Indian so brutally that he went crazy.⁸⁶

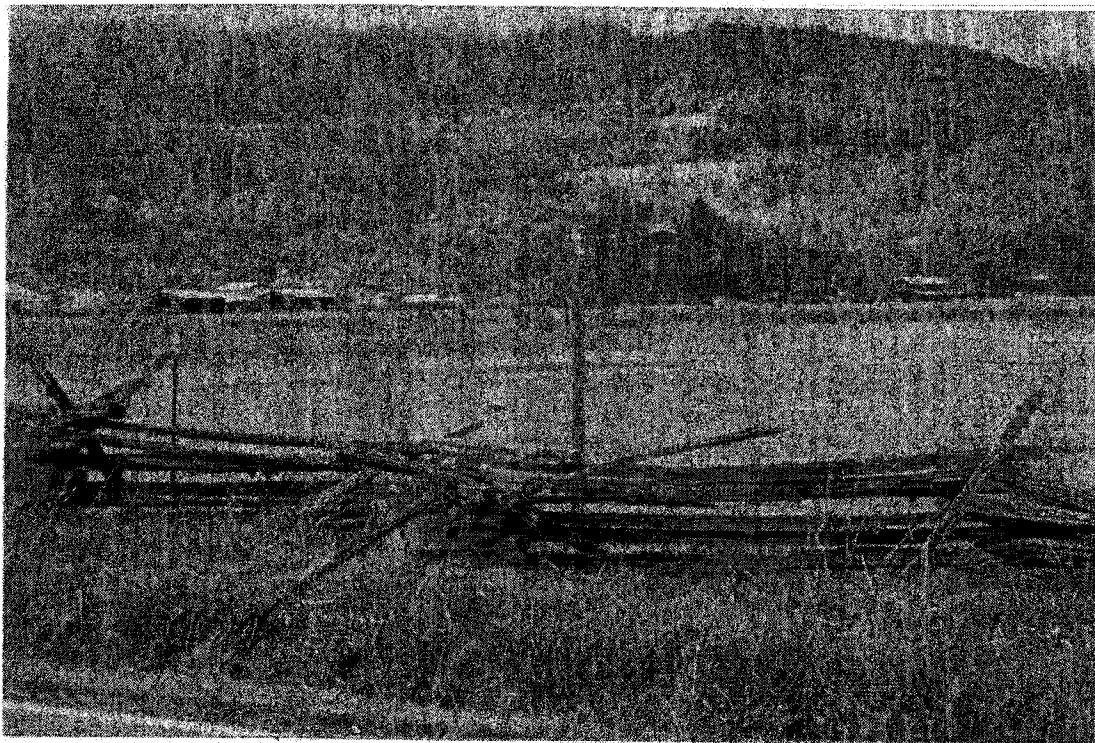


Figure 1.2: The last remnants of the wooden fence built by Indian workers in the mid-nineteenth century. Photo courtesy of Deborah Bauer.

Why did white ranchers treat Indian workers in this manner, if they needed their labor and assumed ownership? Historian James Oakes suggests market forces countered the paternalism on slave plantations. While some masters

⁸⁴ Tassin, "Chronicles of Camp Wright: Part I," 28.

⁸⁵ Arthur Deposition, February 28, 1860.

⁸⁶ Agnes Duncan and Leland Fulwider interview by Les Lincoln, 6/22/90, RVOHP.

treated their slaves kindly, they also bent to market demands. In order to maximize profits, masters mistreated slaves in order to increase production and harvest crops on time.⁸⁷ White ranchers also faced similar market forces. They required Indian labor in an area with a small white population, and employed force to keep Indians at work. Consequently, Indians suffered at the hands of white ranchers as well as murderous white militia units.

Since whites employed paternalism irregularly, Indians resisted the poor working conditions off the reservation. A white rancher believed rather than killing livestock for food, Indians killed livestock out of spite for working conditions. H.L. Hall hired thirteen Indians to pack freight from Ukiah to his ranch in Eden Valley, a distance of about forty miles, and promised to pay the workers a shirt for their service. After the Indians completed the job, he reneged on the deal. When the freighters complained, Hall whipped ten of them in order to keep them quiet. Even though the thirteen workers left shirtless, they obtained their payment in another fashion. Hall and other whites in the

⁸⁷ James Oakes, *The Ruling Race: A History of American Slaveholders* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1998, 1982).

area suspected the disgruntled workers killed his horses that fall.⁸⁸

Besides killing livestock, Indians attacked their employers. In 1863, a group of Yukis plotted to kill George Bowers, a rancher in Williams Valley. Bowers, though, discovered the cabal and killed two of the Indians, but the third escaped. In April 1863, Hope-no-clan (Yuki) came up from behind Bowers and cut off his head with an axe. U.S. soldiers stationed in Round Valley and a contingent of settlers set out after Hope-no-clan. The army tracked him to a village and attacked, killing men, women and children. During his trial, Hope-no-clan admitted, "Bowers would kill me and I thought it was best to kill Bowers first, which I did by cutting his head in three pieces with an axe." The army found Hope-no-clan guilty and hanged him on December 7, 1864.⁸⁹

Shortly after Hope-no-clan killed his employer, an Indian cook who worked for Henley, an Indian worker for L.D. Montague, and Pike, a teamster on George White's ranch, plotted to kill all the white ranchers in the valley. The cook attempted to poison Henley with strychnine, but mistakenly put quinine in his employer's

⁸⁸ William Scott Deposition, March 2, 1860, IWP, F2753: 471.

⁸⁹ For Hope-no-clan's murder of George Bowers see Tassin, "Chronicles of Camp Wright: Part II," 174; Capt. C.D. Douglas to R.C. Drum, April 11, 1863, OR, 50, 1: 203-04.

coffee. Meanwhile, the other Indians stole weapons and provisions from his employer, but the ranchers discovered their plot. The trio fled Round Valley, and in the process killed Concow women harvesting wheat in a field. Whites and Indians later discovered and killed the three ringleaders. Henley hung his cook from an oak tree, and the Concows killed Pike, and put his head on a pole.⁹⁰

The cook's and Pike's deaths failed to squelch the uprising. In July 1863, a Yuki chief and some of his tribesmen burned the barn and hay of rancher S.S. Davis. Settlers reported to Captain C.D. Douglas the Yukis had conspired with mountain Indians to destroy the white ranchers' property, kill all the whites in the valley, and then retreat to the mountains. Douglas and settlers captured the ringleaders of the plot, tried, convicted and hanged them.⁹¹ Rather than docile "pets," Indian workers actively protested, violently at times, the working conditions off the reservation. Killing employers, butchering livestock, and burning personal property may have slightly improved the Indians' living conditions. Acts of group violence against Indians seemed to abate after 1865. As historian Eugene Genovese

⁹⁰ Potter Manuscript.

⁹¹ Tassin, "Chronicles of Camp Wright: Part II," 174-75; Capt. C.D. Douglas to R.C. Drum, July 26, 1863, *OR*, 50, 1: 231; George Hanson to William Dole, August 22, 1863, M234, 39: 297.

suggests, everyday acts of resistance demonstrated to the entire slave community - white and black - some white masters failed to meet their ends of the social contract.⁹² In the same way, Indians killing livestock, burning barns, and killing (or threatening to kill) their employers may have forced white ranchers to rethink their treatment of Indians. White ranchers who depended on Indian workers may have protested the actions of the militias, because, as we have seen above, men like Shannon needed Indians to work and avoided violence.

The threat of violence and limited access to customary food sources forced Indians to reorder their economies to meet new circumstances. Harvesting wild food sources still contributed to the Indians' diets. In fact, many California reservations lacked adequate food stores, and relied on Indian harvesting.⁹³ An *Alta California* reporter wrote, "During my visit I have seen immense sacks filled to overflowing with acorns, gathered last fall by the Indians, and I learn from Mr. Storms that there are stored at the various rancherias at least two thousand bushels of this nutritious nut."⁹⁴ Superintendent James McDuffie agreed with the earlier

⁹² Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll*, 597-660.

⁹³ See Hurtado, *Indian Survival*, 152-53.

⁹⁴ *Alta California*, May 29, 1858, M234, 36: 825.

assessment when he inspected Round Valley. He found enough acorns on the reservation to provide for the Indians living on the farm.⁹⁵

The manner in which Indians gathered and processed these items resembled indigenous labor practices. The *Alta California* reporter observed, "the vast field is chequered [sic] with the homely, yet picturesque, garbs of the squaws, who may be seen squatting on the ground, and raking through the grass for roots and seeds, which, when picked, are pitched into their big cone-shaped baskets."⁹⁶ After harvesting the acorns, Indian women crushed them between two flat stones, and ground them into a meal.⁹⁷ Indian women adapted old labor patterns to the new reservation environment. Indians relied on indigenous food and labor, and used older methods, technology and methods of processing to secure their subsistence.

The seasons still dictated the pace of Indian work and the problem of subsistence. Benjamin Arthur observed, "In the summertime, the Indians do not kill much stock and the whites do not kill so many Indians. But in the winter time, the resources of the Indians

⁹⁵ J. McDuffie to A.B. Greenwood, September 14, 1859, M234, 37: 526.

⁹⁶ *Alta California*, May 29, 1858, M234, 36: 825-26.

⁹⁷ Austin Wiley to William Dole, September 1, 1864, M234, 39: 1189.

being less the Indians kill stock, the whites turn out to hunt the Indians who killed the stock."⁹⁸ As before contact, food stores ran low during the winter, but contact exacerbated the shortage. Whites pressed Yuki food stores, and restricted the ability of Indians to hunt and harvest for their livelihood. Indians ran precariously low on food during the winter, and had few options except to kill livestock. That decision put them on a collision course with white ranchers.⁹⁹

The manner in which Indians killed livestock resembled precontact hunting methods. A.G. Tassin described how Wailackis hunted cattle and horses in Summit Valley, north of Round Valley:

Their plan of operation was to line the tops of the foothills all the way down to its opening on the main valley, and remained concealed until the time came for them to act. The stock, smelling them, would soon begin to evince signs of disquietude and anxiety, and look about for a way to escape. The Indians at the lower end, near the main valley, would then gradually show themselves, and by whistling, gesticulating, and shaking sticks, to which were attached pieces of hides and old clothes, would stampede the stock and drive it in the direction they wanted - that is, the upper part of the gap towards the mountains - each Indian showing himself as the stock ran past him; and once out of the gap and the neighborhood of the main valley, the work of slaughter began.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ Arthur Deposition, February 28, 1860.

⁹⁹ For Indian concepts of seasons and time in New England, see William Cronon, *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1983).

¹⁰⁰ Tassin, "Chronicles of Camp Wright: Part II," 179.

Tassin's description resembled the ways Indians in California and the rest of North America conducted large-scale hunts. Group hunting techniques relied on the concerted effort of the group.

"The work of slaughter" also conformed to precontact methods. Tassin reported, "A few animals in the rear of the stampeded herd would be killed, skinned, cut up, and packed at once to their camp, and the meat hung in the sun to dry." Laurence Batailles also observed, "When they butcher the animal, they take the carcass, hide, and head to the rancheria."¹⁰¹ Even though the two men ignored the way Indians divided these tasks, it probably depended on how Indians processed their kill before contact. Wailacki men, for instance, dispatched the animals, while women disassembled the carcasses and prepared the food for consumption.

The persistence of precontact labor still left Indians vulnerable to starvation and white violence. Indians who killed and butchered livestock faced violent white settlers, who hunted and wiped out entire villages. Whites also prevented Indians from procuring native food sources. One white man kicked an Indian woman digging for roots and gathering clover in a field, declaring "he

¹⁰¹ Ibid.; Batailles Deposition, February 28, 1860.

said he would be damned if he would allow them to dig roots or pick clover as he wanted it for hay."¹⁰² Another white man killed Indians while they gathered acorns.¹⁰³ Though necessary for survival, indigenous labor, like reservation and off-reservation labor, placed Indians at risk.

White settlement in Round Valley created a new world of work for the Round Valley Indians and white employers. The federal government hoped labor would civilize and control Indians at the same time it provided for self-aggrandizement. Government officials like Thomas J. Henley and Simmon Storms used Indian workers to accumulate land and cattle. White ranchers racially defined Indian workers and attempted to control their future. Whites considered the Indians who worked for them docile and unthreatening. Unemployed Indians deserved the wrath they received from whites. Indians blended old and new ways of work on and off the reservation. They resisted, adapted, and accommodated to the presence of white in Round Valley. Some openly resisted white settlement by killing their employers, while others employed everyday forms of resistance, such

¹⁰² Burgess Deposition, July 28, 1860.

¹⁰³ Scott Deposition, March 2, 1860.

as running away and killing livestock. On the other hand, agreeing to work represented an accommodation on the part of Indians to the changing world, whatever the risks and shortcomings. Indians no longer controlled their economic lives. Whites expropriated Indian labor and livestock damaged customary food sources.

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Chapter 2:
Wages of Survival:
Labor and the Peace Policy, 1865-1880

Sitting down with the Dawes Commission in 1884, Charles Brown (Pomo) recalled his experiences on the Round Valley Reservation. In 1878, agent Henry Sheldon put him to work scalding and butchering hogs, a particularly gruesome and nasty job. Then, Sheldon failed to pay him and other Indian workers. Fed up with reservation's working conditions, he and other Pomos left Round Valley and went to work in the Ukiah Valley's hop fields, the place from which the government removed the tribe in the 1870s. There, ranchers paid him in cash, a much more desirable method of payment.¹

Brown's statements to the Dawes Commission suggest the changes Indian labor underwent in the fifteen years following the Civil War. After 1865, agents oriented Indian labor toward the broader market economy. Agents believed cheap Indian labor could make a profit for the federal government, and control Indians, training them in the benefits of civilization. Agents, though, ignored Indians' reasons for working. The market economy and the instrument that moved it - cash - lured Indians, who used

¹ "Conditions of Certain Indians in California," *Senate: Reports*, 48th Congress, 2nd Session (1884-85), serial no. 1522, 74.

cash wages to supplement rations and harvesting.²

Furthermore, Indians used off-reservation worksites to promote cultural institutions. White ranchers had few qualms about paying Indians cash or allowing cultural institutions on their property. They had two objectives: maintain Indians as a pliant labor force and break up the reservation.

After the Civil War, Round Valley agents attempted to market reservation surpluses and use the proceeds to benefit the Indians. In 1866, Indian labor produced excesses of wheat, corn and hay. The agent and superintendent sold the crops for \$822.72, and used the money to purchase cattle for the reservation.³ The following year, the reservation owned a 6,000-bushel surplus of wheat, but superintendent B.C. Whiting complained the lack of markets and adequate transportation routes prevented him from selling the

² Historians, such as Albert Hurtado and Brian Hosmer, have argued that Indians adjusted to the introduction of wages into the economic lives. Native Americans began demanding wages and employing them for their survival, often much to the chagrin of their white employers. See Brian Hosmer, *American Indians in the Marketplace: Persistence and Innovation Among the Menominees and Metlaktlans, 1870-1920* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1999); Albert Hurtado, "Indians in Town and Country: The Nisenan Indians' Changing Economy and Society as Shown in John A. Sutter's 1856 Correspondence," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*, 12:2 (1988), 31-51.

³ Burgess Deposition, July 28, 1860; Capt. C.D. Douglas to R.C. Drum, January 19, 1863, OR, 50, 2: 289; Charles Maltby to D.W. Cooley, December 4, 1865, M234, 41: 294. For sale of surplus crops see, Charles Maltby to D.W. Cooley, March 21, 1866, M234, 41: 348; Charles Maltby to D.W. Cooley, April 16, 1866, M234, 41: 425.

crops.⁴ The agents' aspirations transformed the purpose of Indian labor. Before the Civil War, Indian labor on the reservation secured the subsistence of Indians and government employees. After the Civil War, agents used Indian labor to produce a profit for the federal government.

Despite the agents' attempts to market reservation surpluses, securing Indian subsistence still occupied the bulk of time for Indian workers. In 1871, reservation crops failed and Indians alleviated the shortfall in rations.⁵ Indians harvested manzanita berries, fished, performed ranch work, and freighted supplies for white ranchers.⁶ The reservation's unpredictable crops forced Indians to look elsewhere for their survival. This, in turn, exacerbated conditions on the reservation because it depleted the agency's workforce.

In 1871, Whiting complained, "Many of the best working Indians belonging to the Reserve were away, laboring for the settlers in the valley & the packers, for fifty cents per day."⁷ This marked the first time agents or ranchers mentioned cash wages in Round Valley.

⁴ B.C. Whiting to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, April 17, 1867, M234, 42: 430-31.

⁵ B.C. Whiting to Ely S. Parker, April 21, 1871, M234, 44: 351, 353.

⁶ J.B. McIntosh to Ely S. Parker, July 29, 1869, M234, 42: 137.

⁷ B.C. Whiting to Ely S. Parker, April 21, 1871, M234, 44: 351.

Previously, the reservation and white ranchers paid the Indians with rations and clothing. Now, white ranchers paid Indians cash, but the reservation provided only food and clothing. The introduction of wages represented a combination of white and Indian action. Certainly, whites instituted the wage system, but an influx of Indians who previously worked for wages contributed. Whiting informed Commissioner of Indian Affairs Ely S. Parker, "The Indians [here] number over nine hundred and are increasing through the arrival of scattered individuals and families who have been at work for farms in the adjacent Country."⁸ Whiting referenced the Little Lake and Potter Valley Pomo bands, whom the California state government removed to Round Valley.⁹ The Pomo had been working for wages in the Ukiah Valley, and, once in Round Valley, the Pomo possibly demanded white ranchers pay their Indian workers with cash.

Agents attempted to use the Indians' demand for wages to increase reservation production. Suffering from a small pool of workers, Whiting offered a \$.50 raise in "groceries & extra clothing & such other articles as are not ordinary issued to the...non-laboring Indians" in order

⁸ B.C. Whiting to Ely S. Parker, February 26, 1871, M234, 44: 339.

⁹ A.G. Tassin, "Chronicles of Camp Wright - Part III: The Tom-Kies, Shanel-Pomos, E-Da-Mas, and Wylackies," *Overland Monthly* 10 (September 1887), 259-63.

to compel Indians to work. The ruse worked, "I very soon got all the help needed," reported Whiting. "And after getting all the harrows & teams running, a large number of Indians with an employee in charge of them was set to repairing fences, splitting rails, chopping wood, grubbing & clearing off new land..."¹⁰ Stimulating Indians to work with extra rations helped both the agency and Indians. Wages secured better material benefits for Indians, and agents used increased wages to finish projects on the reservation. Whiting also revealed a little about the organization of labor on the reservation. Indians worked under the supervision of white employees. This method continued for sometime in Mendocino County.

Indians earned rations and clothing for on reservation work, cash for off reservation labor, and hunted and harvested to supplement their larders.¹¹ According to Whiting, this economic relationship suited Indians, "The Indians on this Reservation are contented and happy, they have plenty to eat and are well provided with clothing and blankets."¹² Until 1879, reservation

¹⁰ B.C. Whiting to Ely S. Parker, April 21, 1871, M234, 44: 352.

¹¹ J.B. McIntosh to Ely S. Parker, July 29, 1869, M234, 42: 137; B.C. Whiting to Ely S. Parker, April 21, 1871, M234, 44: 352.

¹² B.C. Whiting to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, April 17, 1867, M234, 42: 430.

agents recorded only two cash transactions with Indians. In 1875, agent J.L. Burchard paid Daniel Webster (Concow) five dollars for working two weeks at the agency sawmill. That same year, Burchard paid an Indian named Alex five dollars for working three days with the threshing machine.¹³

During the administrations of agents J.L. Burchard and Henry Sheldon, Indians and agents vied to control the meaning of Indian labor. The agents arrived in Round Valley as part of President Ulysses S. Grant's Peace Policy. In an effort to promote a more humanitarian approach to Indian Affairs and end graft and corruption in the Indian Office, Grant shared the administration of Indian Affairs with churches. The Methodist Church assumed responsibility in Round Valley.¹⁴ In 1871, it named Hugh Gibson the first Methodist superintendent in Round Valley. Two years later, it appointed Burchard reservation agent. Burchard was born in Delaware in

¹³ Receipts and Disbursements, box 105, letterbook: Cash Book, 1875-1895.

¹⁴ For the Grant's Peace Policy, see Prucha, *Great Father*, 1: 485-533. For case studies of the Peace Policy in California and elsewhere see Clyde Milner's excellent *With Good Intentions: Quaker Work among the Pawnees, Otos, and Omahas in the 1870s* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982); Norman Bender, "New Hope for Indians": *The Grant Peace Policy and the Navajos in the 1870s* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1989); Todd Benson, "The Consequences of Reservation Life: Native Californians on the Round Valley Reservation, 1871-1884," *Pacific Historical Quarterly* 60 (May 1991), 221-44; Miller, "Yuki," 176-265.

1824. In 1860, he arrived in California and worked in the Church South before assuming the job of Indian Agent.¹⁵

Under Burchard, Indians worked on various improvement projects. In 1873, Burchard proposed building a church on the reservation because of the detrimental effect of some people in Covelo. "You may not know," he informed the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, "but such is the fact that the majority of the settlers in this valley are of the Democratic type who were sympathetic with the South during rebellion, and of course [are opposed] to the Administration of the Government, and some of them to the inauguration of the Peace Policy of the President." The Southern Democrat contingent planned to build a church in Round Valley, and Burchard feared, "the other party may get ahead of us and thereby obtain a controlling influence in the Valley, which will be detrimental to the interests of the Reservation."¹⁶ Burchard's comments revealed the political climate of the post-Civil War era and his religious background. He "waved the bloody shirt" to

¹⁵ C.V. Anthony, *Fifty Years of Methodism: A History of the Methodist Episcopal Church Within the Bounds of the California Annual Conference from 1847 to 1897* (San Francisco: Methodist Book Concern, 1901), 313.

¹⁶ J.L. Burchard to E.P. Smith, August 29, 1873, M234, 45: 97-98.

accentuate dangers posed by opposition forces, and trusted religious institutions would ameliorate the situation. Burchard concluded his plea by proposing to build a new church, "I would most respectfully ask your permission allowing me to contribute building timber, to be cut on the reservation, and furnished by Indian labor without any cost to the Government or labor of employees."¹⁷

Burchard made similar proposals during his tenure. In 1873, Burchard requested \$1,750 to purchase a steam engine. He explained, "Our miller is accustomed to steam mills, and can run it with Indian labor, making no additional expenses."¹⁸ In 1876, Burchard proposed selling housing material to whites, "I furnish (in most cases) some Indian men to aid in making shakes, and this without money, get half for the Government...."¹⁹ The cost-conscious Burchard recognized the usefulness of Indian labor to such a project. Indian labor allowed Burchard to complete project cheaply because he paid Indians with rations the government already provided, and other white workers to concentrate on their reservation labors.

¹⁷ Ibid., 98.

¹⁸ J.L. Burchard to E.P. Smith, September 12, 1873, M234, 45: 108.

¹⁹ J.L. Burchard to J.L. Smith, November 14, 1876, M234, 48: 523.

Burchard also tied Indian labor to leases he made with white ranchers. In 1873, Burchard proposed cutting reservation timber and sawing the logs in William Van Nader's saw mill. Van Nader would provide the mill, logging teams, skilled labor (an engineer, teamster, sawyer, and lumber piler), and pay half the expenses. Burchard agreed to supply animal feed, reservation timber, and "eight Indian men, more or less, as may be required, [and] to furnish provisions for said Indians..."²⁰

Burchard suggested a similar agreement with Jacob Updegraff. Burchard would provide Indian shepherds, reservation land for pasture, medicine for sick sheep, Indian labor to build "fences, corrals and cabins for herders in live in," and food for the Indian workers. Updegraff would graze ten thousand sheep on reservation rangeland, provide skilled workers to oversee sheep

²⁰ J.L. Burchard to E.P. Smith, August 30, 1873, M234, 45: 101.

shearing, and give one-half of the wool to the government.²¹

Agency construction projects and leases with local white businessmen revealed the Burchard's perceptions of Indian workers. In the leases, Van Nader and Updegraff provided skilled white workers, while Burchard supplied the unskilled Indian workers. Burchard doubted Indians' ability to perform skilled jobs or work without a white supervisor. In 1876 he stated, "I find it impossible to run our mill with less than three white men with any safety or success."²² He explained, "no lumber has ever been sawed wholly by Indian labor; we have a regular employee as Sawyer, a special engineer as engineer, and another to superintend the cutting and hauling of the logs to the saw mill."²³ One year later he described the organization of labor in the reservation's hide tanning business, "the Indians slaughter the cattle, and dry the hides ready for market...but they are under the

²¹ J.L. Burchard to E.P. Smith, February 23, 1875, M234, 47: 118-19. Burchard and Updegraff had been negotiating a deal with the federal government since 1873 (see J.L. Burchard to E.P. Smith, August 8, 1873, M234, 45: 78-79). Interestingly, Burchard secured the consent of the Round Valley Indians for this lease (Consent of Indians, n.d., M234, 47: 848-49). Despite Indian and federal consent, Updegraff had a difficult time putting sheep on reservation land, because other white ranchers pre-empted his claims and refused to remove their animals from the mountains surrounding Round Valley (Jacob Updegraff to B.R. Cowen, August 25, 1876, M234, 48: 660).

²² J.L. Burchard to E.P. Smith, May 30, 1876, M234, 48: 235.

²³ J.L. Burchard to J.L. Smith, February 7, 1877, M234, 48: 104.

superintendency of the herdsman who is a regular employee; an Indian cuts the meat, and issues the same at the butcher shop every night to the work Indians, but he also is under the supervision of some one of the employees...."²⁴ The government and whites believed Indians could neither perform skilled jobs nor work without supervision. Their apparent inadequacies best suited them for agricultural labor or other unskilled professions.²⁵

Leases and other government work projects also furthered the goals of federal Indian policy. Burchard suggested reservation labor controlled the Indian population. Off reservation labor, according to Burchard, harmed Indians, "said Indians are used, kept, and held, much in the same way as slaves were in the former slave states." In order to demonstrate the deplorable conditions prevailing on ranches, Burchard cited the absence of churches and schools, and also white ranchers believed they owned Indians. Burchard proposed gathering these Indians and placing them on the

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ This is a common stereotype applied to people of color. For Indians see, Martha C. Knack and Alice Littlefield, "Native American Labor: Retrieving History, Rethinking Theory," in *Native Americans and Wage Labor*, 28-29. For Hispanic workers see, Sarah Deutsch, *No Separate Refuge: Culture, Class, and Gender on an Anglo-Hispanic Frontier in the American Southwest, 1880-1940* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 122-23.

reservation. There, Burchard could supervise their activities, "farmers can then hire Indians from the Reservation that need help, at reasonable wages, the children of said Indians can remain here at school in the meantime."²⁶ Burchard also criticized migrant labor. He told the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, "When our Indians go away 70 or 80 miles (many on foot) to pick hops, the journey is a long tiresome one, and they are more or less demoralized when so long away, drinking, white men, gamblers, merchants, and others seem determined to get the last dime of their hard earnings, so they return not only foot sore and penniless, but demoralized..."²⁷ All off reservation labor, thought Burchard, harmed the moral fabric of Indian life. Indians lacked the institutions that inculcated civilization and wandered into the den of drinkers and gamblers when they were away from the reservation. Reservation work projects and leases protected Indians from the inimical atmosphere off the reservation.

These ideas coalesced into a proposal to grow hops on the reservation. In 1875, J.L. Bransford, a hop farmer in Mendocino County, proposed operating a private

²⁶ J.L. Burchard to E.P. Smith, December 4, 1874, Special Cases, Box 58.

²⁷ J.L. Burchard to J.L. Smith, November 18, 1876, M234, 48: 534.

hop ranch on reservation land. He suggested splitting the proceeds with the federal government and paying Indians \$5,000 to pick the crop. Bransford concluded, "The Indians in the meantime will remain at home and under the control of Reservation authorities and will be advanced in the very important industry of tilling the soil thereby fitting them to earn their own living as the Indian bureau seems to be fitting them to that end."²⁸ Bransford understood Burchard's goals and reinforced racial ideas about Indian workers. The hop project would force Indians to stay on the reservation (and under the control of Burchard), and eventually provide for Indian self-sufficiency. At the same time, the proposal marginalized Indians to unskilled or poorly paid jobs. Besides picking the hops, Bransford suggested paying ten Indians \$120 each to clear the land, plant the hops, and train the vines. However, the Indians worked under a white supervisor, who earned \$400 for the same eight-month term.²⁹

The Office of Indian Affairs rejected Bransford's proposition, but the possibility of growing hops, and its attendant uses, intrigued the office. In 1875,

²⁸ Thomas Bransford to J.L. Burchard, October 26, 1875, M234, 47: 454

²⁹ Ibid., 457-58. For a description of hop growing see, Tomlan, *Tinged with Gold*, 45-81.

Commissioner J.L. Smith ordered Burchard to hire a hop raiser for the agency, and begin planting the crop.³⁰ Burchard supported the commissioner's directive, "by raising hops here, we can pay [Indians] the same price for picking, keep them home, and under our control."³¹ These proposals should also make us consider who benefited from Indian labor. Since Burchard paid Indians only their allotted rations, the profits from these projects went to the federal government, a shady agent, and white ranchers.

Burchard's assessments of Indian labor reflected his ethnocentric bias, and failed to consider the meanings Indians invested in wage labor. Burchard disgustedly explained, "Some of the Ukies [sic] go to those sweathouses on week evenings and spend the entire night (and often several nights in succession) in sweating, gambling, dancing, etc., thereby totaling unfitting them for work when they return, being very sleepy and stupid for days afterwards." Yuki doctors also lived on ranches and administered to sick Indians.³² Working off the

³⁰ J.L. Smith to J.L. Burchard, December 13, 1875, M234, 51: 881.

³¹ J.L. Burchard to J.L. Smith, November 18, 1876, M234, 48: 534. Burchard first made this request in September 1875 (J.L. Burchard to E.P. Smith, September 30, 1876, M234, 48: 412).

³² J.L. Burchard to E.P. Smith, January 23, 1875, M234, 47: 55-56. See also, J.L. Burchard to E.P. Smith, December 4, 1874, Special Cases, Box 58.

reservation, either on the ranches of whites in Covelo or as migrant workers, allowed Indians to practice ceremonies banned on the reservation. White ranchers offered an inducement to Indian workers - freedom to practice their religious and ceremonial life. Yuki laborers created a community that transcended reservation boundaries and which included reservation Yukis who attended the off reservation festivities.

We should not minimize the importance of Indian religious functions at California ranches. Agricultural worksites spread the Ghost Dance throughout California. Originating in the Great Basin among the Paiutes, the Ghost Dance entered the Pit River country in 1871. However, a Wintu-Yana man named Norelputus changed the Dance into the Earth Lodge Cult. Norelputus brought the Earth Lodge Cult to the Stonyford Pomo in 1872. Anthropologist Cora DuBois described the central tenets of the Earth Lodge cult, "whereas the Ghost Dance stressed the return of the dead, the Earth Lodge cult stressed the end of the world. The faithful were to be protected from the catastrophe by the subterranean houses which they built for that purpose."³³

³³ Cora Du Bois, "The 1870 Ghost Dance," *Anthropological Records* 3: 1, 39-114, 132.

Santiago McDaniel, a Stonyford Pomo, preached the Earth Lodge message on the hop ranch in Round Valley. Samson Grant (Atsugewi) recalled McDaniel's first dance in Round Valley, "He entered the lodge carrying a staff, walked to the center pole, faced south, closed his eyes and sang. Then he thrust the staff into the ground, continued singing, beating time on his chest. The song was: *yolol mi a kam, wala kene no, esa wita kam.*"³⁴ McDaniel exhorted followers to give up their jobs, and perform the dance. Ralph Moore's father followed McDaniel's advice, "Santiago lighted a pipe, smoked and passed it to my father. He smoked, too, then Santiago took the pipe and shook out fifty-cent piece. That is the way to get money, he told my father." That spring, Moore's father gave up his jobs shearing sheep in order to dance.³⁵

Economic relations were important to the Earth Lodge. McDaniel told the Round Valley Indians, "If you do as I tell you, it will happen so. We shall live in good houses. We shall hire white men to work for us. Your wife won't have to cook. White women will cook for

³⁴ Ibid., 106.

³⁵ Ibid.

you."³⁶ McDaniel and other Earth Lodge preachers sought to overturn northern California's economic relationships with the new ceremony. The Earth Lodge would invert economic hierarchy by placing Indians at the top and whites at the bottom. Indians gravitated to worksites throughout Mendocino County to hear this hopeful message, and understood the uneven power relations of nineteenth century California. In time, they believed they would change places with white men and women and California would be Indian country once again.

In addition to supporting ceremonial institutions, Indians combined ranch labor with reservation resources. Yukis collected rations, clothing, and blankets on the reservation, and then worked for white ranchers. When government rations expired, the Indians returned to the agency to work and collected rations again.³⁷ After spending years on the reservation, the Yuki understood the unreliability of government resources. Working on and off the reservation secured wages, rations, and clothing for the Yuki. This arrangement angered some reservation Indians. Burchard related "the Indians that stay on the reserve justly complain that they have work

³⁶ Ibid., 105, 106, 136. This fact was not lost on DuBois. She recognized the importance of agricultural labor in introducing Indians to the message.

³⁷ J.L. Burchard to E.P. Smith, January 23, 1875, M234, 47: 55-56.

to do, which others evade by absenting themselves."³⁸ In an unstable environment, Yukis maximized their opportunities by blending cash wages with government rations.

While the agent bemoaned the detrimental aspects of off reservation labor and Indians imbued work with their own meaning, white ranchers and their political representatives cited Indian labor as an example of Burchard's unfitness for the job. In 1875, California congressman J.K. Luttrell conducted an informal investigation into reservation conditions, and condemned the agency.³⁹ He criticized the Indians' living and working conditions. Indians lived in squalid conditions, lacked clothing, and suffered from syphilis. Luttrell explained the Indians lived in "grass huts," and, because Burchard sold items intended to be Indian rations, "[subsisted] on acorns, pumpkins, and other articles unfit to eat."⁴⁰ Luttrell excoriated Burchard and the reservation for failing to promote self-advancement and agriculture among the Indians. "As regards farming of

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Luttrell's report, and the following quotes, can be found at J.K. Luttrell to E.P. Smith, January 16, 1875, M234, 47: 902-18. Luttrell's campaign was illustrative of others against the Round Valley Reservation. See for instance Charles Nordhoff, *Northern California, Oregon and the Sandwich Islands* (New York: Harpers and Brothers Publishers, 1875), 153-67.

⁴⁰ J.K. Luttrell to E.P. Smith, January 16, 1875, M234, 47: 903, 909.

the reservation," Luttrell wrote, "there is no incentive for the Indians to work. He is forced to labor poorly fed and clothed, and returns from it at night to cook his own victuals."⁴¹

Aside from failing to promote initiative and self-advancement, Indians labored under the threat of the whip. Luttrell explained, "It pains me to say in this age of civilization, I found an American citizen, one of God's disciples, adhering to a system of punishment both brutal and barbarous, and for which treatment of these poor, ignorant savages, I am compelled to earnestly recommend his removal. ... [T]he Indians have been stripped, tied to a post and whipped upon the bare back by the Agent or under his instructions."⁴²

To further illustrate his point, Luttrell compared the reservation Indians' condition with that of Ukiah Valley Indians. Luttrell alleged many Pomos left Round Valley because of Burchard's poor treatment. After the Pomos escaped from him, they thrived in the Ukiah Valley. They owned enough clothing, advocated education for their children, and understood the value of the dollar. Many Pomos had deposited their money in an Ukiah city bank.⁴³

⁴¹ Ibid., 913-14.

⁴² Ibid., 907.

⁴³ Ibid., 917-18.

Luttrell correctly assessed the reason why Pomos left and refused to return to Round Valley. They had participated in Mendocino County's wage system for many years, and disliked the fact agents paid Indians in rations. Yet, he missed the communal values that Pomos expressed. They deposited their earnings as a community rather than as individuals. A similar misreading occurred when Luttrell described the life of reservation Indians. He denigrated the Indians' subsistence patterns, indigenous dwellings and food sources that remained a vital part of Indians life. Rather than abject poverty, Indians supplemented their diets with acorns and probably preferred wild food sources to garden-raised produce.

While Burchard's treatment of Indians appeared to bother Luttrell, Burchard's attempts to curtail the free enterprise of non-Indians further galled him more. Luttrell stated, "The citizens also complained to me, that vegetables and other articles were sold from the reservation at a much cheaper rate than they could afford to sell the same articles, and that as a consequence their business was injured."⁴⁴

⁴⁴ Ibid., 910.

While the condition of reservation Indians may have moved Luttrell, his political connections truly motivated him. He represented ranchers in the valley who strove to break up the reservation. Luttrell minimized the conflicts between Indians and white ranchers, "The Indians and whites live on the most amicable of terms: the whites treating the Indians kindly and refusing them liquor."⁴⁵ At the same time, Luttrell wanted soldiers in Round Valley to protect ranchers and their livestock from a possible revolt of mountain and valley Indians.⁴⁶ Those who knew the history of Round Valley understood this as a tired refrain. However, Luttrell's use of the threat suggests it still resonated among some whites, even though formal complaints of Indians killing stock had dwindled during the Civil War. Luttrell added he thought the government should allow ranchers to remain in Round Valley, and the settlers and government grazed the mountain land in common.⁴⁷

Luttrell's proposal to solve the problems of the corrupt agent and squalid living conditions of Indians presaged changes in the direction of federal Indian policy. "The present system is but little better than

⁴⁵ Ibid., 902.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 902.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 912.

slavery," declared Luttrell, "and in order that it may be remedied and the Indian offered some incentive to labor, I would recommend that the land be divided into small farms of 5, 10, or 20 acres, and that each Indian or family be assigned to his tract of land, in order to cultivate the ground and produce his own bread and vegetables."⁴⁸

Luttrell's report forced the Office of Indian Affairs to investigate conditions in Round Valley. Some citizens rushed to Burchard's defense, claiming reservation Indians attended school, and refrained from "gambling, horse racing, whiskey drinking and fighting" on the Sabbath.⁴⁹ They also recognized Indian tastes, rather than hunger, dictated the Indians' diet, "[the Indians] prefer their native foods, and would do so if they had all the grain and vegetables in the state at their command."⁵⁰

In 1875, William Vandeever conducted a federal investigation into the situation. He informed the Commissioner of Indian Affairs the Indians' lives had improved since Burchard took over, and their conduct at their workplaces proved this. When Vandeever happened

⁴⁸ Ibid., 914. He also recommended giving Indians livestock and farming equipment.

⁴⁹ Citizens of Round Valley to E.P. Smith, n.d., M234, 47: 1017-21.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 1019.

upon an Indian working in the fields, the Indian was drawing Euclid's propositions in the dirt. Vandeever used this interaction to demonstrate that education succeeded in Round Valley. Burchard accomplished much in religious training as well, "while at work in the fields, the Indians, that is those who are religiously inclined, which may be said to be nearly all of them, repeat aloud the next sermon."⁵¹ Vandeever concluded the reservation succeeded in its intended goal, because the Indians applied the ideas they learned in church and school to the workplace.

Luttrell maintained his anti-reservation campaign throughout the summer. In June 1876, he reiterated many of his complaints in California newspapers, and revealed his true intentions. He proposed turning over the reservation to private citizens living in Mendocino County.⁵² He also leveled accusations of corruption against Vandeever, "[The citizens] all say the investigation was unfair, that they honestly believe he had entered into the Indian ring and was one of them."⁵³ Luttrell's campaign against the reservation revealed his

⁵¹ William Vandeever to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, May 27, 1875, enclosed in Report of Second Lieutenant H.G. Tassin, January 1, 1875, Special Cases, Box 58. See also William Vandeever to E.P. Smith, July 20, 1875, M234, 47: 1209-11.

⁵² "Round Valley," June 5, 1876, M234, 48: 268.

⁵³ Ibid.

ties with wealthy ranchers in Round Valley and a partisan battle over Indian Affairs. He wrote, "I admit, so far as the Republican party management is concerned upon the Indian reservation, and also in reference to the Mare Island navy-yard, there have been fraud and dishonesty, for which the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. Cannon] and others on the Republican side of the house are responsible."⁵⁴ Luttrell further explained his political and financial ties. George W. Henley informed Luttrell of Vandever's actions in Round Valley. Luttrell elaborated, "[Henley] is, thank God, a good Democrat. He was a member of the Legislature from Mendocino county..."⁵⁵ Luttrell's comments reflected the political climate of the late nineteenth century. As Reconstruction and the clamor for social change ended, politicians began a battle to reform government corruption. What better place to begin the skirmish than with the Office of Indian Affairs?

Despite Round Valley citizens' and Vandever's support, Burchard had to answer to a number of charges. First, he leased the reservation's sutler store to a white rancher from Covelo. In this way, he certainly

⁵⁴ Ibid. Mare Island refers to a shipyard located in Vallejo, California.

⁵⁵ "Round Valley," June 5, 1876, M234, 48: 268.

sided with certain residents of Round Valley, who may or may not have had the Indians' best interests in mind.

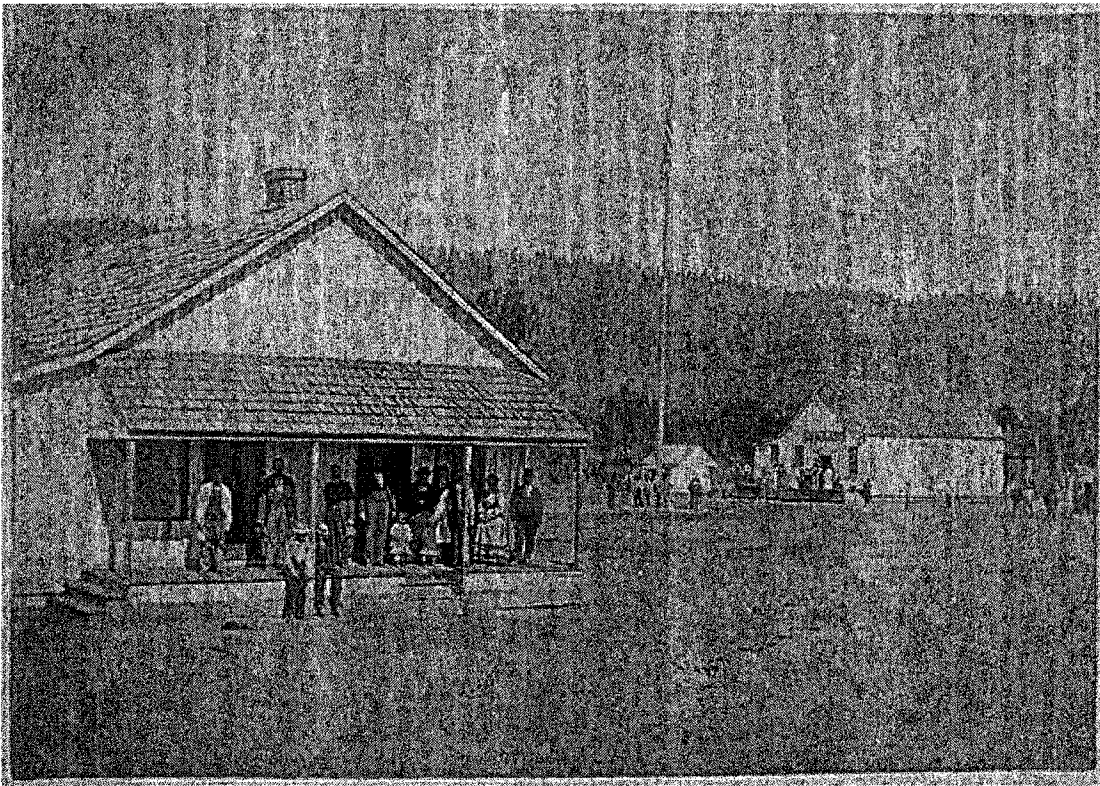


Figure 2.1: Sutler Store on the Round Valley Reservation. Agent J.L. Burchard leased this store to Martin Corbitt, a white rancher in Covelo. Photo Courtesy: "Office and Sutler Store, Round Valley Agency, California, 1876, National Archives and Records Administration, Still Picture Records.

Burchard also had to account for the charge of beating Indians. He admitted some Indians had been beaten, but testified he had reformed the practice. Previously, employees struck Indians "for trivial offenses and sometimes for no offense at all."⁵⁶ Burchard stated he only whipped two Indians, and only one seriously. He ordered the whipping of Frank Miller

⁵⁶ J.L. Burchard Testimony in William Vandever to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, April 31, 1875, Special Cases, Box 58.

because of his work conduct. Miller left the reservation without permission - once in the middle of threshing grain - ignored his duties by allowing a horse to graze in a grain field, and threatened the agency's farmer, James Brown.⁵⁷ Brown supported Burchard's testimony. If Indians proved unruly, Burchard locked them up. As far as whipping, "in three or four cases Indians have been whipped to a moderate extent. I have known in these cases that the Indians were tied up, and whipped on the bare back, but not so as to draw blood: but a few lashes were applied with a black snake or with a switch - usually not more than five or six lashes - one Indian named Frank Miller was whipped harder than this but no blood was drawn - Frank was a very bad man and he is now one of the best men I have."⁵⁸

Indians rallied to Burchard's defense too. George Burchard (Concow) told Vandeever previous agents had failed to feed the Indians, and "had severely whipped men, women, and boys until they had become sick and died."⁵⁹ Burchard refrained from this practice, and

⁵⁷ J.L. Burchard to J.K. Luttrell, November 21, 1874, M234, 47: 922; J.L. Burchard to E.P. Smith, January 30, 1875, M234, 47: 73-74; William Vandeever to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, April 31, 1875, Special Cases, Box 58.

⁵⁸ William Vandeever to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, April 31, 1875, Special Cases, Box 58.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

George wanted him to stay. Charles Monsong (Concow) harbored some reservations about the agent. He complained white employees and sick and elderly Indians received sugar, coffee, and tea along with their rations, while working Indians collected only their flour and meat allocation. Still, he thought Burchard acted "true and kind" and should remain in charge.⁶⁰

Luttrell's endeavor to remove Burchard and the subsequent investigation into Burchard's conduct revealed the connections between Indians, ranchers, and the federal government. Luttrell's comments reflected post-Civil War political demands for government reform, and his representation of landed interests in California. His associate, George Henley, took up his father's crusade and campaigned to break up the reservation. On the other hand, Burchard deserved condemnation. He beat Indians and made close connections with certain businessmen in Covelo. These ties undermined his position on the agency, and made him susceptible to charges of corruption. Certain Indians supported his actions, and believed reservation conditions - beatings and all - improved under Burchard.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

In August 1877, Burchard resigned, and the Methodist Church appointed Henry Sheldon to replace Burchard on the Round Valley Reservation.⁶¹ Born in 1829 in Ohio, Sheldon arrived in California as part of a contingent of Methodist missionaries in 1852. He served in central and northern California until the Methodist Church named him the Round Valley agent.⁶²

During Sheldon's administration, Indian labor conditions changed very little. Indian men planted crops, cut wood and repaired roads and worked in the reservation's saw and grist mills. Indian women husked corn on the agency farm. A few Indians assisted the agency's herdsman with the reservation's livestock by herding cattle, tending pigs, overseeing the breeding of mares, and protecting crops and stock from the depredations of ranchers. These men also killed and butchered the agency's cattle herd, and engaged in some household production, by using cowhides to make riatas

⁶¹ C. Sunny to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, August 6, 1877, M234, 48: 340; C. Sunny to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, August 27, 1877, M234, 48: 345.

⁶² Hurtado, *Intimate Frontiers*, 51, 81-82; Anthony, *Fifty Years of Methodism*, 98-99.

and braided lassos.⁶³ Sheldon continued to pay Indians in rations of beef, flour, and assorted articles of clothing, but amended the policy for hop picking. Those Indians who picked the agency's hops earned 1 ¼ cents per pound, and exchanged their pay receipts in Covelo for either cash or merchandise.⁶⁴ Agents finally bent to Indian demands for cash, but these payments linked Indians closer to white businessmen, who would use these debts to their advantage.

Aside from the continuing labor practices, Sheldon held prevailing beliefs about labor, race, and the social control of Indians. Reservation jobs, particularly hop picking, Sheldon argued, "[kept] the Indians at home...as could not be done otherwise..."⁶⁵ In addition to using labor as a means of social control, Sheldon initially

⁶³ Henry Sheldon to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, January 19, 1878, M234, 48: 615-16; Henry Sheldon to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, April 11, 1878, M234, 50: 714; Henry Sheldon to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, June 6, 1878, M234, 50: 746; Henry Sheldon to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, July 13, 1878, M234, 50: 768; Henry Sheldon to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, September 13, 1878, M234, 50: 809; H.B. Sheldon to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Jun 9, 1879, Special Cases, Box 58; H.B. Sheldon to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, June 30, 1879, Agent-CIA Correspondence, Box 1, Letter Book: 6-11-79 to 2-28-82; Henry Sheldon to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, July 15, 1879, Agent-CIA Correspondence, Box 1, Letter Book: 6-11-79 to 2-28-82; Henry Sheldon to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, November 15, 1879, M234, 51: 946; Henry Sheldon to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, April 13, 1880, M234, 52: 921-22.

⁶⁴ Henry Sheldon to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, October 8, 1880, M234, 52: 1115-17.

⁶⁵ Henry Sheldon to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, February 8, 1879, M234, 51: 751.

hired white men rather than Indians for skilled jobs. For instance, those Indians employed at the saw and grist mills worked under the supervision of a white employee.⁶⁶ Sheldon explained, "[Indians] can and do help, but to take the responsibility and direction of such work, they cannot."⁶⁷ He later added, "the Indians must have constant supervision."⁶⁸ Sheldon considered the Indians incompetent. "These Indians are not as intelligent as those east of the Sierra's, but of a lower order, and it is difficult to reason with them, and impress them with either that which will be an advantage to themselves, or with the moral disadvantages of a lazy, reckless, and sinful life."⁶⁹ His opinion remained unchanged after two more years at Round Valley, "These Indians are not like those east, and north, but are contemptuously called 'Digger' because of their low, groveling nature, as well as because of their root digging."⁷⁰ Sheldon espoused prevailing racial ideas about California Indians, but

⁶⁶ Henry Sheldon to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, July 13, 1878, M234, 50: 768; Henry Sheldon to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, June 9, 1879, Special Cases, Box 58; Henry Sheldon to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, April 13, 1880, M234, 52: 922.

⁶⁷ Henry Sheldon to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, February 8, 1879, M234, 51: 751.

⁶⁸ Henry Sheldon to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, August 16, 1879, M234, 51: 870.

⁶⁹ Henry Sheldon to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, December 15, 1877, M234, 50: 610.

⁷⁰ Henry Sheldon to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, February 8, 1879, M234, 51: 751.

hoped labor would regiment and discipline Indians and prepare them for their future.⁷¹

Even though the agency paid Indians in a form of scrip, Indians continued to work off the reservation. Indian men herded and sheared sheep, while women performed domestic labor such as ironing and washing clothes.⁷² Off reservation labor vexed Sheldon as much as it did Burchard. Sheldon complained about the Indian buildings still erect on ranches, "these Henley Indians are permitted to do as they please, having a sweathouse, where liquor, and lewdness run riot from Saturday evening till Monday morning."⁷³ Off reservation labor disrupted the peaceful atmosphere Sheldon attempted to create. In 1879, Potter Valley Pomo sheep shearers and off reservation Yukis brought alcohol to the reservation Indians.⁷⁴ As with other working class Americans, Indians made alcohol a part of their social life outside of work. In March 1884, Henry Sheldon arrested an Indian captain for being drunk and bringing liquor on the reservation.

⁷¹ For race, labor and Indians in California see Rawls, *Indians of California* and Pitelka, "Mendocino."

⁷² Henry Sheldon to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, February 8, 1878, M234, 50: 670-71; Henry Sheldon to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, January 21, 1879, M234, 51: 737-38; Henry Sheldon to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, April 6, 1878, M234, 50: 710; Henry Sheldon to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, June, 30, 1879, Agent-CIA Correspondence, Box: 1, Letter Book: 6-11-79 to 2-28-82.

⁷³ Henry Sheldon to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, March 20, 1879, M234, 51: 793.

⁷⁴ Sheldon to CIA, June 30, 1879.

Sheldon wrote, "Prisoner is an old captain of his tribe and one of the worst of his tribe to gamble and Drink." Then Sheldon inscribed in parentheses, "(though seldom drunk)." Rather than the drunken Indian of myth and stereotype, this aged captain was quite possibly a social drinker like other Americans in the late nineteenth century.⁷⁵ Some Indians, and whites too, took drinking too far, but it would be unfair to characterize these Indians as the drunken Indian of the conventional stereotype.

Indians stayed away from the reservation, even though Sheldon had a lot of work for them. In 1877, Sheldon told the Commissioner, "The greatest source of trouble arises from the fact that so many are idle. I have plenty of work for them to do, but I have no beef to feed them."⁷⁶ The following year, Sheldon made similar comments, "[We cannot clear more land] because we have

⁷⁵ H.B. Sheldon to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Letters Received, 1881-1907, 1884: 688. On Indians and alcohol see, William Unrau, *White Man's Wicked Water: The Alcohol Trade and Prohibition in Indian Country, 1802-1892* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1996); Kathryn Abbott, "Alcohol and the Anishinaabeg of Minnesota in the Early Twentieth Century," *Western Historical Quarterly* XXX (Spring, 1999): 31-34. For general discussions of alcohol consumption in the United States and among the working class see, W.J. Rorabaugh, *The Alcoholic Republic: An American Tradition* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1979); Kathy Piess, *Cheap Amusements: Working Women and Leisure in Turn-of-the-Century New York* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986); Madelon Powers, *Faces Along the Bar: Lore and Order in the Workingman's Saloon, 1870-1920* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).

⁷⁶ Henry Sheldon to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, December 15, 1877, M234, 50: 610-11.

not the means to pay the Indians for their work, and it would require but little to do that, yet that little is wanting."⁷⁷

Indians refrained from reservation labor because of the poor rations they received. The agent paid Indians in rations for their reservation work, typically an issue of beef, a coffee pot, pot of beans or loaf of bread.⁷⁸ Sheldon estimated an Indian who worked 17 weeks on the reservation earned \$29.33 in beef, flour, salt, blankets, and clothing.⁷⁹ Compounding the problem of rations and wages, the reservation lacked many items the agent issued to Indian workers. Between 1878 and 1880, Sheldon complained about the lack of clothing and shoes. He depicted the scene in Round Valley in the bleakest of terms, "How can men work, or women, with so little civilization, remain virtuous, under such circumstances." Sheldon suggested Indian women had few choices because of the shortage of supplies, "[They] are no better, I am sorry to say, than some of their white sisters, but will

⁷⁷ Henry Sheldon to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, September 13, 1878, M234, 50: 809.

⁷⁸ Henry Sheldon to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, January 19, 1878, M234, 50: 616; Henry Sheldon to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, November 15, 1879, M234, 51: 946; Henry Sheldon to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, January 22, 1880, M234, 52: 830.

⁷⁹ Henry Sheldon to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, February 8, 1878, M234, 50: 670-71; Henry Sheldon to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, January 21, 1879, M234, 51: 738-39.

sell their virtue for clothes, for clothes, they will have."⁸⁰

Sheldon interpreted the decision to work off the reservation in purely economic terms. Indians earned cash money off the reservation. Indians made anywhere from \$.50 to \$2.50 per day for domestic work, farm labor, or shearing sheep. Indian shepherds made a monthly salary of \$30, because they spent long periods secluded in the mountains.⁸¹ In addition, wages allowed Indians to become consumers. Indians purchased items the agent never issued, such as sugar, tea, coffee, and yeast, with cash. Much to the agent's chagrin, wages purchased alcohol as well.⁸² As with the case during Burchard's administration, Indians demanded more than rations alone. Wages purchased items unavailable on the reservation, and provided more security against shortfalls in government appropriations. Indians blended the two work environments to maximize their economic situation.

⁸⁰ Henry Sheldon to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, January 8, 1878, M234, 50: 621. See also Secretary of the Interior to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, May 14, 1878, M234, 50: 332-33; Secretary of the Interior to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, August 17, 1878, M234, 50: 347; Henry Sheldon to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, July 12, 1880, M234, 52: 1005.

⁸¹ Henry Sheldon to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, February 8, 1878, M234, 50: 670; Henry Sheldon to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, January 21, 1879, M234, 51: 738.

⁸² Henry Sheldon to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, February 8, 1878, M234, 50: 670-71; Henry Sheldon to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, January 21, 1879, M234, 51: 738-39.

In addition to providing much needed income, ranch labor expressed Indian discontent with reservation life. Indians voiced their disapproval with working conditions and other aspects of reservation life in numerous ways. Indians who lacked shoes refused to work in the fields or cut timber. Other Indians stole grain from the reservation granaries, and broke tools.⁸³ In 1880, Sheldon proposed purchasing mules for the reservation farm because, "the Indians can work them better than horses, as they are not so liable to balk, and nor are they so easily spoiled by bad driving."⁸⁴

Problems concerning wages, Indian resistance, and the Indian's antagonism toward Sheldon converged at the sawmill. During Burchard's tenure, Indian sawmill workers earned lumber, but the Commissioner of Indian Affairs ended this method of payment. By the time Sheldon assumed the position of agent, the agency still owed sawmill workers the equivalent of 41,000 feet of lumber. Indians demanded payment in cash, but Sheldon rejected their proposal. Indians then went on strike and refused to work at the sawmill in the winter. They also

⁸³ Henry Sheldon to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, January 19, 1878, M234, 50: 618; Henry Sheldon to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, July 12, 1880, M234, 52: 1005; Todd Benson, "Consequences of Reservation Life," 238.

⁸⁴ Henry Sheldon to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, February 28, 1880, M234, 52: 834.

may have had a hand in the labor organization in the mill. In 1879, Sheldon complained Indian workers needed a white supervisor because "they can not be trusted with the engine."⁸⁵ Examples of Indians "spoiling" horses and ineptness with machinery is suggestive. However, Southern slaves performed many of the same acts on slave plantations. Demanding better wages, balking at the prospect of working, and sabotaging machines were only a few of the methods Round Valley Indians had at hand with which they could protest their working conditions.⁸⁶

Leaving the reservation remained the most popular way to protest working conditions. In 1879, Calpella Pomos fled the reservation to protest poor wages. Sheldon had promised to pay Indians \$1.50 per day of work, half in rations and the other half in cash. However, Charlie Brown stated, "We were worked there too hard, and [Sheldon] didn't give us enough to eat.... I killed 100 hogs myself, and scalded and cleaned them, but the Indians didn't get any of them." Sheldon also made onerous demands on his workers. Brown complained he

⁸⁵ Quote from H.B. Sheldon to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, June 9, 1879, Special Cases, Box 58. See also Henry Sheldon to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, April 11, 1878, M234, 50: 714-15; Henry Sheldon to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, July 15, 1879, Agent-CIA Correspondence, Box: 1, Letter Book: 6-11-79 to 2-28-82; Henry Sheldon to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, July 15, 1879, M234, 51: 843-44.

⁸⁶ See Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll*, 587-660.

forced Indians to work while they were sick, "when we were not able to work he forced us to work, and when we would not work he said he would put us in the smoke house. He put some of us in the smoke house pretty nearly everyday."⁸⁷ Apparently, a number of Indians disdained the reservation's working conditions. When refusing to work failed, Brown and the Pomos left the reservation and returned to Ukiah. There, Pomos found better wage and working conditions on white ranches. During the summer, they made \$600 picking hops. Then, Pomos obtained a loan, and used their money to purchase land and lumber for houses. Brown explained, "We all live in a bunch, but I don't know but five who have land."⁸⁸ This incident is instructive because it shows the injustice Indians felt with working conditions in Round Valley, but it also shows how wage labor reinforced the Pomo's communal values. They engaged in wage labor,

⁸⁷ "Conditions of Certain Indians," 76, 78.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 74-75, 77. The Potter Valley Pomo had a similar story. In 1879, they left the Round Valley Reservation because of the poor working conditions and agent Henry Sheldon's failure to provide a school in Round Valley. Once back in the Ukiah Valley, the Potter Valley Pomo made \$800 picking hops. With the money, the Pomos purchased 56 ½ acres of land and lived there in common. See *ibid.*, 78-80. For the Potter Valley and Calpella Pomo see also, Henry Sheldon to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, October 17, 1878, M234, 50: 823-24; Henry Sheldon to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, November 26, 1878, M234, 50: 854-57; Henry Sheldon to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, April 23, 1879, M234, 51: 801; Henry Sheldon to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, April 30, 1879, M234, 51: 815.

but pooled their wages to advance community and tribal goals.⁸⁹

Sheldon acknowledged the problem associated with Indians leaving the reservation, "I greatly fear, indeed I know, that as soon as spring fairly opens many more will leave, thus greatly crippling our force for the summer's work...."⁹⁰ Since the beginning of the reservation, Indian workers absconded from the reservation. Even in the late 1870s, Indians fled to areas with which they maintained cultural ties.

By the end of the 1870s, Sheldon and Indians compromised on the issue of wages. In 1879, Sheldon hired Dick Willits (Little Lake), Peter Hudson (Redwood), James Jameson (Redwood) and Bob Green (Concow) as assistant blacksmiths and carpenters. The following year, Sheldon and the Indian Office expanded the agency workforce to include Dick Wesley (Yuki), Frank Short (Yuki), Santa Wilson (Concow) and Charles Wright (Concow) to work as two millers, a clerk, and a herdsman, respectively. These men earned a quarterly salary of \$30

⁸⁹ Other Indian groups also left the reservation. Wailackis moved to the Eel River, where there were three camps and sweathouses, Redwoods left for Long Valley, and Concows returned to Butte County. Henry Sheldon to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, November 26, 1878, M234, 50: 854-60; Henry Sheldon to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, January 21, 1879, M234, 51: 739; Henry Sheldon to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, March 20, 1879, M234, 51: 794.

⁹⁰ Henry Sheldon to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, February 8, 1878, M234, 50: 669.

and, unlike reservation laborers, they earned cash money rather than rations.⁹¹ In the middle of 1880, Sheldon inquired about expanding the reservation workforce and establishing an Indian police force.⁹² Still, Sheldon had little good to say about agency workers. He wrote of Wilson, "The asst. [clerk] is an Indian boy, so all his writing has to be proofread."⁹³ Indians and Sheldon, though, disagreed about the meaning of these positions. Sheldon hoped he could control Round Valley workers with the lure of wages and civilize them. For Indians, skilled labor represented a new way for Indians to make money on the reservation.

By 1880, Round Valley Indians were the backbone Mendocino County's growing agricultural economy, but Indians and non-Indians took different meanings from Indian labor. Agents believed wage labor assisted in the management of the reservation. Employing Indians cut

⁹¹ Henry Sheldon to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, August 16, 1879, Agent-CIA Correspondence, Box: 1, Letter Book: 6-11-79 to 2-28-82; Henry Sheldon to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, August 16, 1879 [2], Agent-CIA Correspondence, Box: 1, Letter Book: 6-11-79 to 2-28-82; Henry Sheldon to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, November 20, 1879, Agent-CIA Correspondence, Box: 1, Letter Book: 6-11-79 to 2-28-82; Henry Sheldon to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, March 2, 1880, M234, 52: 846; Estimate of Funds for the First Quarter, 1880, M234, 52: 838; Estimate of Funds for the Second Quarter, 1880, M234, 52: 935; Estimate of Funds for the Third Quarter, 1880, M234, 52: 1035; Cash Book, 1875-1895, Receipts and Disbursements Box 105, letterbook: Cash Book 1875-1895.

⁹² Henry Sheldon to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, June 21, 1880, M234, 52: 986.

⁹³ Henry Sheldon to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, November 15, 1879, M234, 51: 942.

government costs and helped control Indians. On the other hand, Indians demanded cash wages, maintained cultural institutions at off-reservation workplaces, and fostered a lively recreational life beyond the reach of federal agents. As Indian labor changed in the last twenty years of the nineteenth century with the advent of skilled labor on the reservation and new directions in federal Indian policy, Indians and non-Indians would again contest the meaning of labor in northern California.

Chapter 3:
From Working Class to..Working Class:
Labor and the General Allotment Act, 1880-1900

In 1884, United States Senator Henry Dawes led an investigation into the conditions of Indians living in California. The commission interviewed Philo Handy, the Round Valley Agency's farmer, who told the Dawes Commission, "Some of [the Indians] are very good laborers and some of them are not, but I think they will average very well with the floating white population."¹ Handy's comments, and others like it, illustrated the different meanings Indians, government officials, and white ranchers extracted from Indian labor during the years preceding allotment. All used the market economy to define racial and ethnic categories for California Indians.

After more than 20 years of Indian-white contact, Round Valley Indians had adapted to and remade the new forms of work introduced by white Americans. This chapter uses a special government census from 1880 to examine the demographic patterns of an American Indian working class. In 1880, the Office of Indian Affairs authorized a census of Indians living near military

¹ "Conditions of Certain Indians," 54.

installations. The Office conducted the census on the Round Valley Reservation, the Standing Rock Reservation in the Dakotas, and Washington state. Historian Frederick Hoxie writes untapped social history data - including censuses, court records, and ration books - held in the field branches of the National Archives can provide a more complete history of Native Americans in the 20th century.² By 1880, tribal ethnicity, job skill, and the accompanying work experience segmented Indian workers.

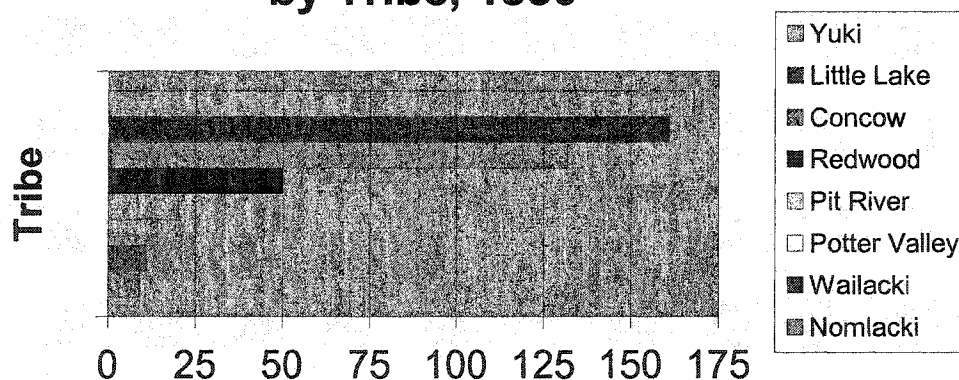
White observers reacted differently to the presence of an Indian working class. White ranchers suggested wage labor civilized Indians, because they wanted the federal government to allot the reservation. On the other hand, government officials' asserted wage labor impeded the path of the Indian Department's work, reflecting new directions in federal Indian policy after 1880, as allotment became the panacea for the Indian

² Frederick Hoxie, "The View from Eagle Butte: National Archives Field Branches and the Writing of American Indian History," *Journal of American History* 76 (June 1989): 172-80. For examples of Native American social history see, Frederick Hoxie, *Parading Through History: The Making of the Crow Nation in America, 1805-1935* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Clifford Trafzer, *Death Stalks the Yakama: Epidemiological Transitions and Mortality On the Yakama Indian Reservation, 1888-1964* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1997); Albert Hurtado, "'Hardly a Farm House - A Kitchen Without Them': Indian and White Households on the California Borderland Frontier in 1860," *Western Historical Quarterly* 13 (July 1982), 245-70.

problem. Working class Indians also supported allotment because subsistence farming seemed to offer an escape from wage labor and reservation poverty. In the end, allotment satisfied only the settlers as the government opened the reservation and Indians continued to work for them.

In 1880, 565 Indians - representing eight tribes - lived on the Round Valley Reservation. Nearly two-thirds of the population (168) came from the indigenous Yuki tribe. The Little Lake and Concow tribes ranked second and third in population with 161 and 132 members, respectively. The Redwood, Pit River, Potter Valley Pomo, Wailacki, and Nomlacki comprised the remaining 104 residents (Table 3.1: Tribal Population Breakdown by Tribe, 1880).

**Table 3.1: Population Breakdown
by Tribe, 1880**



Indians enforced tribal distinctions in daily life. Former reservation agent J.L. Burchard remarked, "As a rule, [the tribes] are distinct in habits, language and appearance."³ Living patterns and household composition demonstrated the Indians' ability to maintain tribal distinctions. Indians lived in tribal settlements. More than half of the Yuki families lived at the Lowerquarters - where they outnumbered other Indian families by more than two to one - and the rest of Yuki lived at various places on the reservation.⁴ Little Lake and Concow families concentrated their settlements more than the Yuki. Fifty-two of fifty-seven Concow families and fifty-five of sixty Little Lake families lived at the Headquarters. The remainder of the families scattered across the reservation. The Indians' settlement patterns are instructive on two levels. First, they demonstrate the lengths to which Round Valley Indians went to maintain a distinctive tribal identity. In this way, they resembled ethnic immigrants filtering into America's urban areas. The Yuki, Concow, and Little Lake families preferred to live in separate enclaves and formed what

³ "Round Valley Reservation Indians," CHMP, 14: 495.

⁴ A Yuki family is one where the head of household is a Yuki. This does not mean indigenous all members of the family are of indigenous tribe, however.

rural ethnic "neighborhoods."⁵ Second, these living patterns resemble precontact arrangements. California Indians lived in tribelets - small of kinship groups, groups led by chiefs, and were "autonomous, self-governing, and independent." Tribelets usually consisted of about 100-150 people.⁶ Round Valley Indians applied these ideas of decentralized social organization to reservation life.

Indians preserved tribal distinctions by marrying other tribal members. In 1880, only 19 Indian men married women of another tribe. For the most part, a member of a large tribe married a person from a smaller tribe.⁷ John Brown (Yuki) married Sally (Wailacki) and they had a daughter, Maggie. A few exceptions existed. Jim Fulwilder (Little Lake) married Molly (Concow) and they had two children - Smith and Anne. In both Brown's and Fulwilder's case, the census maker considered the children of these bi-ethnic marriages a member of the father's tribe. The presence of multiethnic households suggests women took the initiative to present their

⁵ For ethnic neighborhoods see Elizabeth Cohen, *Making a New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919-1939* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

⁶ Bean, "Social Organization," 100-01.

⁷ The Redwood, Potter Valley, Pit River, Nomlacki, and Wailacki were small tribes, and the Yuki, Concow and Little Lake were the large tribes.

tribal identity to census takers. Still, these marriages were exceptional in the census. Most Indians married members of their tribe rather than of other tribes.

Aside from ethnicity, occupation divided Indians. Three classifications of worker existed in Round Valley: agency, laborer, and indigenous. Agency workers had specialized reservation jobs and earned a quarterly salary.⁸ Laborers worked for the agency temporarily, had unskilled tasks, and earned rations. They supplemented on-reservation labor with migrant labor, ranch work and other assorted jobs. Indigenous workers performed pre-contact craft skills.⁹ (see Table 3.2: Indian Occupations, 1880)

Table 3.2: Indian Occupations, 1880



Despite the differences job skill created, one aspect united these workers: gender. Of the 204 workers counted on the census, only five were women. Four women

⁸ These jobs included Gate Keeper, Ox-Driver, Teamster, Assistant Miller, Assistant Sawyer, Herder, Clerk, Carpenter, and Blacksmith.

⁹ These jobs included Medicine Man, Grinding Seeds, Digging Roots, Basketmaker, and Arrow Maker.

practiced indigenous work and the other was an agency worker. The census makers ignored housewives and domestic workers in the census, thereby marginalizing women's contribution to the Indian family's survival.¹⁰

Agency workers performed numerous reservation jobs. The agency hired Indian blacksmiths, carpenters, herdsmen, teamsters, ox-drivers, gatekeepers, clerks, assistant sawyers, assistant millers and cooks (the only women). At first, Indian blacksmiths and carpenters were assistants or apprentices, but by 1893 Indians served as head blacksmiths and carpenters.¹¹ Indian carpenters built reservation houses and buildings while herders kept the reservation's cattle herd within its boundaries and defended it from white settlers.¹² Agency workers earned a salary of \$120 per year. While this was far better than the rest of the reservation Indians, white employees

¹⁰ See, Jane Collins, "Housework and Craftwork within Capitalism: Marxist Analyses of Unwaged Work," in *Marxist Approaches to Economic Anthropology*, Alice Littlefield and Hill Gates, eds., (New York: University Press of America, 1991), 91-99. This is an interesting anomaly. John Moore found the 1880 Cheyenne census included women's domestic labor. See "Kinship and Division of Labor in Cheyenne Society," *ibid.*, 135-58.

¹¹ Receipts and Disbursements, box 105, letterbook: Cash Book, 1875-1895.

¹² For example, see, Henry Sheldon to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, June 30, 1879, Agent-CIA Correspondence, box 1, letterbook: 6-11-79 to 2-28-82.

earned \$400 per year for the same tasks.¹³ In addition, the agent paid Indians inconsistently, if at all. In 1890, the reservation agent allowed George White, a white rancher, to pay reservation workers (agency and laborers), and he refused to pay Indian workers their salary.¹⁴

In addition to salary, the agency workers' age and household composition set them apart from laborers and indigenous workers. Agency workers represented the youngest men on the reservation, and their average age was 27 (see Table 3.3: Average Age of Workers). The agency workers' young age suggests the connections between agency labor and the assimilation campaign. Since the early stages of the United States' effort to civilize Indians, reformers believed agriculture and domestic industry led Indians from their "savage" state to a "civilized" one. Both, reformers reasoned, promoted the values of industry and thrift among Indians, thereby preparing them for a new role in America.¹⁵ In addition,

¹³ For pay of Round Valley employees see, Sheldon to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, November 20, 1879, Agent-CIA Correspondence, Box 1, letterbook: 6-11-79 to 2-28-82; Receipts and Disbursements, Box 105, letterbook: Cash Book, 1875-1895.

¹⁴ Report on Round Valley Agency by Arthur Tinker, July 3, 1890, M1070, roll 43.

¹⁵ For the early stages of the civilization campaign and emphasis on domestic industry, see Prucha, *Great Father*, 1: 135-44 and Bernard Sheehan, *Seeds of Extinction: Jeffersonian Philanthropy and the American Indian* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1973), 119-47.

those people who commanded institutions bent on changing Indian life - whether they were reservations or Spanish missions - believed the young were more malleable and open to the civilization process than older Indians.¹⁶ Finally, Indian agents recognized selecting young men was a means of achieving social control. They could use desirable jobs to undermine and disrupt native leadership by providing new avenues to power that went through the agent.¹⁷

Table 3.3: Average Age of Workers

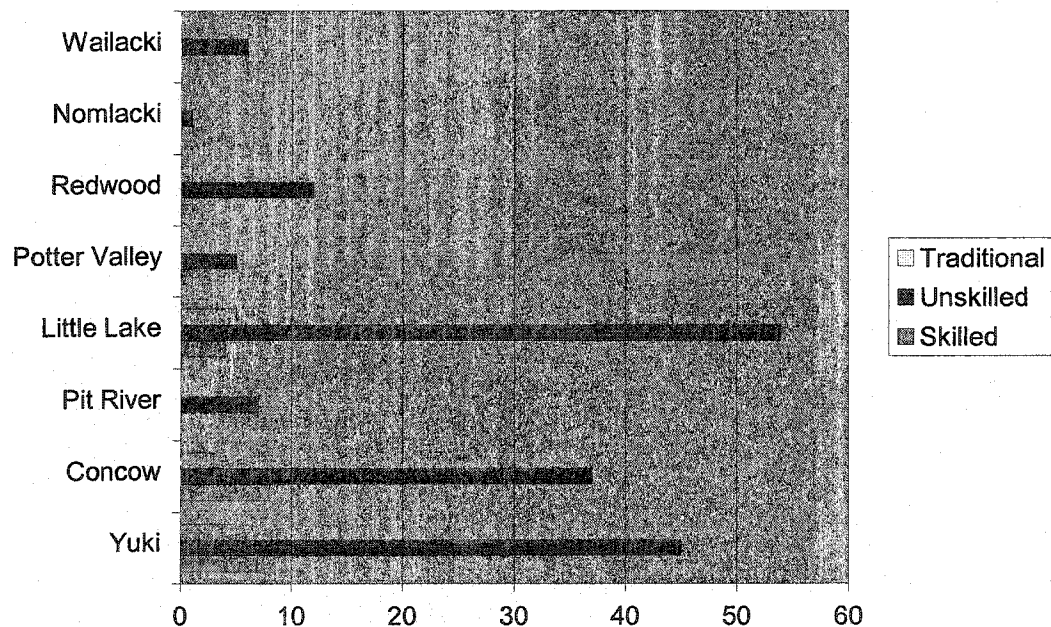
	Men	Age	Women	Age
Arrowmaker (Indigenous)	1	50	0	
Assistant Miller (Agency)	1	26	0	
Assistant Sawyer (Agency)	1	29	0	
Basketmaker (Indigenous)	0		2	50
Blacksmith (Agency)	1	32	0	
Carpenter (Agency)	4	37	0	
Clerk (Agency)	1	50	0	
Cook (Agency)	0		1	23
Digging Roots (Indigenous)	0		1	40
Gatekeeper (Agency)	1	45	0	
Grinding Seeds (Indigenous)	0		1	50
Herders (Agency)	7	26	0	
Laborer	168	37	0	
Medicine Man (Indigenous)	9	52	0	
Ox Driver (Agency)	2	25	0	
Teamster (Agency)	3	23	0	

¹⁶ For Spanish friars selecting Indian youth at missions see Hackel, "Land, Labor, and Production," 122-23.

¹⁷ See, for instance, Hoxie, *Parading Through History*; Robert Utley, *The Indian Frontier of the American West, 1846-1890* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1984); William Hagan, *Indian Police and Judges: Experiments in Acculturation and Control* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966).

Agents also favored certain tribes when hiring agency workers. The three teamsters - Jim Anderson, Dicksey, and Josiah - were Yuki as were the two Ox-Drivers - Ben Benson and Reuben. Five of the seven herders - Jim Wesley, Jr., George Moore, Doctor Gibson, Charles Wright, and Henry Clay - were Concow. The Yuki and Concow represented two of the three largest tribes on the reservation, and their members had lived on the reservation since its inception. This accounts for their high representation among agency workers.

Table 3.4: Tribal Distribution of Workers, 1880



In addition to tribal ethnicity and age, nearly all agency workers farmed land and owned property. Daniel

Webster owned one horse, one pig, and farmed eight acres. James Sherwood owned one horse and cultivated five acres of land. Bob Green owned four horses, 25 pigs, and farmed five acres of land. These men appeared to be among the most progressive and civilized men on the reservation.

Even though agency workers were part of the agents' scheme to bolster authority and civilize Indians, the workers learned a skill and earned wages instead of rations, an important consideration on a reservation where rations were sporadic.¹⁸ Agency work also provided opportunities for Indians to maintain tribal identities. In 1888, agent C.H. Yates complained the Indian police only arrested members of other tribes.¹⁹ The Indian police selectively administered justice on this multi-tribal reservation. Arresting members of another tribe garnered tribal support by sanctioning tribal feuds and protecting members of one's tribe. Even though agency

¹⁸ On other reservations, Indians used these occupations for their purposes, not those of the agent. Anthropologist Loretta Fowler argues the Gros Ventre took agency jobs because it was an alternative path to "prominence," an important cultural value. See *Shared Symbols, Contested Meanings: Gros Ventre Culture and History, 1778-1984* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987), 60-66. Historian Brian Hosmer argues logging entrepreneurship allowed some Menominees to gain new accesses to power. However, these positions were usually contingent on the ability to balance their individual economic and political aspirations with communal goals for logging. See *American Indians in the Marketplace*, 36-117.

¹⁹ ARCIA for 1888, 22.

jobs created certain class distinctions, tribal ethnicity cut across these vertical forms of social organization.

Agency workers played prominent roles on the reservation and performed kinship duties. Agency workers lived in relatively stable households.²⁰ Nine agency workers headed simple family households, while eight led extended households. Some sociologists and anthropologists argue skilled, and apparently better off, Indian workers ignored or minimized their kinship obligations. They refused to distribute their income among relatives and take older relatives into their household.²¹ In Round Valley, household composition and kinship duty had less to do with cultural change and more to do with age. Consider Peter Bell's (Little Lake) family. He was 21, a reservation herder and lived with his wife Lizzie, who was 15. They had no children (they were too young and probably newlyweds), personal property and land. Bell simply lacked the means to care for an

²⁰ I borrow my categories of family types from Hurtado, *Indian Survival*, 197 n.6. The three types of households in Round Valley were no family ("did not contain an identifiable conjugal couple"), simple family ("a couple"), and extended family ("blood-related kin in addition to the nuclear unit"). For reasons that will become apparent later, I have differentiated between families, whether no family, simple family or extended family, that did and did not have children.

²¹ See Eric Henderson, "Skilled and Unskilled Blue Collar Navajo Workers: Occupational Diversity in an American Indian Tribe," *Social Science Journal* 16 (April 1979), 63-80 and Marvin Munsell, "Land and Labor at Salt River: Household Organization in a Changing Economy," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Oregon, 1969.

extended family. Conversely, older agency workers assumed kinship obligations. Doctor Gibson (Concow) was 45, a reservation herder, and lived with his wife Eliza, their three children (Lena, Joseph, and Albert), and his mother-in-law, Pah-kah-pé-na. He owned four horses, one dog and had farmed one acre of land for four years. Older agency workers, like Gibson, assumed community responsibilities because they had the means to do so, while younger workers had not worked long enough to accumulate wealth.

Indigenous workers engaged in craft practices common before Euroamerican contact. In 1880, there were nine medicine men, two female basketmakers, one female seed grinder, a female root digger, and a male arrow maker. Aside from the medicine men, indigenous workers engaged in household or subsistence production. It is difficult to know whether Bill Sampson (Little Lake), the arrow maker, or Old Nancy Weston (Yuki), a basketmaker, sold their goods or how much they made from any transaction. In addition, there is no evidence to suggest whether seed grinders and root diggers sold their harvested food items. However, precontact craft specialists earned a nominal fee for making items used in hunting, and fishing, and harvesting wild food items. California

Indians also paid Indian doctors for their services.²² It is unlikely these workers subsisted solely on the proceeds from their craft specialization, but it certainly supplemented their rations.²³

In addition to household production, indigenous workers subsisted on harvesting wild food sources. The baskets Weston and Há-a-tum (Yuki) made had multiple uses. Women gathered wild food sources in the baskets, or gave them to people who might use them for the same purpose. Suzy and Jane Panne (both Yuki) relied on their indigenous jobs to supplement their rations with wild food sources. Suzy ground seeds and Jane dug for roots.

Indigenous workers also supported ceremonial life. Medicine men clandestinely performed ceremonies on the reservation, and more openly at the off-reservation roundhouses. It is likely they earned a small payment for their services. In the late nineteenth century, indigenous workers, such as craft specialists and subsistence procurers, provided for the survival of Indian culture, handiwork, and households.

Indigenous workers came from the oldest Indians living on the reservation. In fact, the oldest person on

²² Bean, "Social Organization," 115-16.

²³ Willoughby, "Division of Labor," 244-61.

the reservation, Old Doctor Potter (Little Lake), was 75 and a medicine man. The average age of an indigenous worker was 50. They were fifteen years older than laborers and nearly twice the age of an agency worker. Three Concow medicine men were younger than their counterparts. Sam Claude, 45, was the oldest Concow medicine man, and the other two Concow medicine men, Doctor Charles and Frank, were aged 35 and 23 respectively. The Concow apparently still trained doctors and these young men could have been apprentices under Claude's tutelage. (Table 3.3: Average Age of Workers) Overall, age made the elderly unattractive candidates for agency or laborer positions, and they supplemented reservation rations with indigenous work.

Indigenous workers concentrated among three largest tribes: the Yuki, Little Lake and the Concow. There were five Yuki, five Little Lake, and three Concow indigenous workers. Only Charley Simpson (Redwood) represented a small tribe. Yukis engaged in more diverse occupations than the Concows and Little Lakes. The Yuki had a medicine man, a seed grinder, a root digger, and two basketmakers. The Little Lake had four medicine men and one arrow maker. The three Concow indigenous workers

were all medicine men. The three tribes' larger population allowed for more diverse occupations.

The households in which indigenous workers lived reflected their age and few options for work. Five workers lived in another person's household. M-shed-an-oi-yah (Little Lake) lived with his son James Sherwood, while Jane Panne lived with her aunt Suzy, and Há-a-tum lived with Old Nancy Weston and her husband George Weston. The three Concow medicine men lived alone. Three indigenous workers lived in simple households without children. Major, Charley Simpson and Doctor Potter (Little Lake) lived with their wives. One other indigenous worker lived in an extended household. Doctor Barchtil (Little Lake) lived with his wife, mother-in-law, and grandson. Most indigenous workers depended on others for their survival because they had few opportunities for wage work. Given their precarious economic position on the reservation, indigenous workers helped one another. For instance, Suzy and Jane Panne lived in one household, as did Old Nancy Weston and Há-a-tum. These women pooled their resources (indigenous skills and rations) and survived on the reservation.

For the most part, indigenous workers did not cultivate land. Only three medicine men farmed. Sam

Clark, a Concow, cultivated four acres of land, owned three cows and one horse. Charley Simpson and Doctor Barchtil also farmed small plots of land, one acre and one-half acre respectively. Since indigenous workers did not farm their own land, they relied on a different economic base than agency workers and laborers. They supported themselves by harvesting wild food sources, collecting rations, and living in large households.

Laborers performed a number of jobs for the agency and white ranchers. On the reservation, they raised the agency's agricultural crops, and off the reservation, they labored as farm workers and domestic servants.²⁴ The Dawes Commission reported, "one or two hundred Indians belonging to the reservation were out temporarily at work in hop fields in adjacent districts."²⁵ The conciliatory labor relations between the agency and the white community facilitated off-reservation labor for Indians. According to Charles Eberle, any white rancher could obtain an Indian worker whenever he desired, "The usual practice has been when a man wanted an Indian to work for

²⁴ For descriptions of on and off reservation labor see, for example, "Conditions of Certain Indians," 27, 37.

²⁵ Ibid., 2.

him the Indian was furnished with a pass in order to leave the reservation."²⁶

Laborers represented a balanced age cohort. The typical laborer was 37, slightly older than the average reservation resident. (see Table 3.3) Of the 168 laborers, 161 were between the ages of 20 and 59. Dick Ray (Concow) was the oldest at the age of 60, while Elisha Keefer (Concow) was the youngest at the age of 16. Unlike the agency and indigenous workers, laborers represented the general age composition of the reservation population.

Laborers came from the entire reservation population. They comprised nearly 83% of the reservation's working population and a high percentage of each tribe. Eighty per cent of the large tribes were laborers. This was not distributed evenly, as 85% of the Little Lakes were laborers, compared to 79% of the Yukis and 77% of the Concow. Small tribes had an even higher percentage of laborers. Ninety-one per cent of small tribe members were laborers, including all of the Pit River, Wailacki and Nomlacki. (see Table 3.4) The agent's tendency to select agency workers from large tribes and the ability of those tribes to maintain

²⁶ Ibid., 27.

indigenous tasks meant proportionally, more members of smaller tribes toiled as laborers.

Laborers lived in simple family households, but a large number lived in extended households. These households were important not for their number, but for who was missing. Two of every three simple or extended households were without children.²⁷ The conjugal couple's ages demonstrates the severity of this trend. The average age of a male head of household without children was 40, while his wife was only three years younger. These couples were in the prime of their childbearing years, yet had no children. Ninety-one per cent of the women living in households without children were between the ages of 20 and 49. Reservations were unhealthy places to live, and diseases frequently struck children, thus accounting for this demographic anomaly.²⁸ In Round Valley, disease struck at working class households, and neither agency nor laborer escaped this trend.

For the most part, laborers earned rations and articles of clothing for working on the reservation. Beginning in 1893, the agency began paying laborers for

²⁷ Households without children are those where there are no children of either of the parents. In some instances, there were children of one parent but not the other. They were counted as a household with children.

²⁸ For health problems on other reservations see, Hoxie, *Parading Through History*, 130-35, 171-74; Trafzer, *Death Stalks the Yakama*.

numerous reservation tasks. It paid laborers one dollar per day for assorted tasks. The agency hired Indians to build fence, clean a well, repair a furnace at the hop house, and erect buildings.²⁹ Off the reservation, Indians earned cash wages picking hops. However, Indians and whites disagreed about how much Indians made. In the 1870s, Indians working on Carl Purdy's ranch in Ukiah received \$.50 per day and flour and meat rations.³⁰ The combination of cash and rations suggests farmers made certain concessions to Indian workers, including relatively good wages, food, and acceptable living accommodations in order to plant, tend, and harvest crops and prevent spoilage.

In the 1880s, Ukiah hop ranchers changed the wage scale and began paying hop-pickers one cent per pound. Purdy remembered piecework allowed ranchers to hire 40 workers to do the same amount of work as 120, and they did not have to feed the workers.³¹ Indians, ranchers argued, reaped the benefits of piecework. According to Barclay Henley, Indians earned anywhere from \$2 to \$4 per day under the new wage scale.³² However, white ranchers

²⁹ Receipts and Disbursements, box 105, letterbook: Cash Book, 1875-1895.

³⁰ Carl Purdy, *My Life & My Times* (Healdsburg, 1976), 62-63.

³¹ Ibid.

³² "Conditions of Certain Indians," 101.

did not pay Indians the same as white agricultural workers. Covelo resident Frederick Townsend stated, "you can get [Indians workers] for less [than white workers]." ³³ In the 1890s, Mendocino County ranchers paid white, Indian and Chinese farm workers different wages. Indian hop pickers earned \$1 per hundred pounds of hops picked. In contrast, white pickers received \$1.10 and Chinese workers earned only \$.90. ³⁴ The wages each ethnic group made suggests the racial hierarchy operating in northern California. Whites stood atop California society, with Indians and Chinese underneath them.

Indian testimony revealed Indians made less money under the piece rate than under the daily wage. Charlie Brown (Pomo) stated he and 72 workers made \$600 in 36 days, or a little more than \$8 each, picking hops in Ukiah and Hopland. ³⁵ Charlie Bourne (Potter Valley Pomo) and his party of 100 made \$800, but he neglected to mention how long his party worked in the fields. ³⁶ Both cases suggest changing the pay scale benefited farmers and hurt Indians. Ranchers paid Indians less money to do the same amount of work as white agricultural workers. In addition, ranchers sometimes cheated Indian workers

³³ Ibid., 30.

³⁴ Tomlan, *Tinged with Gold*, 127.

³⁵ "Conditions of Certain Indians," 75.

³⁶ Ibid., 80.

out of their wages, and paid them in alcohol.³⁷ From the Indians' perspective, wages could have sustained the communal values of their group. Rather than promoting an individualistic pursuit of cash wages, Indians could have consciously spread the amount of work evenly among tribal members and ensured everyone earned an equal amount.

Laborers had few opportunities to obtain agency jobs because agency workers monopolized them. Between 1879 and 1895, only 48 Indians, or about 20% of Indian males, held the ten agency jobs. Jim Henley, for instance, held four posts on the reservation: farmer, herder, police officer, and miller. Jack Anderson, Wesley Hoxie, Peter Hudson, and James Sherwood each had three different agency jobs. Another seven workers had two agency jobs.³⁸ Job mobility was limited to a few select Indians and few laborers had the opportunity to move up Round Valley's occupational ladder.

The pace of work differed for agency workers and laborers. Laborers conformed to seasonal demands for work, performed a number of jobs, and traveled all over Mendocino County. For instance, in the spring, Indians sheared sheep in the mountains surrounding Round Valley.

³⁷ Castillo, "Impact of Euro-American Exploration," 114.

³⁸ Receipts and Disbursements, box 105, letterbook: Cash Book, 1875-1895.

In the summer, Indians harvested hops throughout Mendocino County. Nearly one fifth of the reservation participated in these excursions, "The [100-120 Indians who do not draw rations] are cosmopolites; here today and on the coast or living in some other valley tomorrow."³⁹

Whether or not white ranchers or the government agents recognized the differences between Indian workers is unclear. It is apparent, though, each had different ideas about the meaning of Indian labor. White ranchers extolled the virtues of wage labor and believed it uplifted Indians. Rancher Saunders Hornboke commented, "There has been a general improvement all the time. All of them were blanket Indians when I first knew them, and the first crop they made they worked with butcher knives and dug it out with sticks...they were no better than brutes when they first came here."⁴⁰ Barclay Henley praised his family's efforts in domesticating Indians, "I think that the most successful attempt ever made in California to civilize the Indians has been made in Round Valley, on our ranch." The Indians who worked for Henley had "beds, fireplaces, and you will find chickens running around the house, and also fruit trees in front of the

³⁹ Report on Round Valley Agency, Cal. by Robert Gardner, March 30, 1892, M1070, roll 43.

⁴⁰ "Conditions of Certain Indians," 57.

house...."⁴¹ Hornbroke supported Henley's assessment of the Indians' progress, "They lived by hunting and fishing, and digging roots [before whites arrived], and when you killed a beef there was a perfect scramble for it. Now they want the best pieces of it only. They are pretty high toned."⁴² By the 1880s, working for white ranchers, not the reservation system, had "civilized" the Indians, or so the ranchers claimed. Indians no longer farmed with antiquated tools, adopted material possessions, and developed sophisticated palates.

Reinforcing their argument, white ranchers favorably compared Indian workers to other agricultural laborers. Hornbroke stated, "Some one said [the Indians] were better than the Chinamen. I never saw a Chinaman picking [hops], but they are better than the white people who pick hops."⁴³ Henley concurred with Hornbroke, "some of them are as good as white farm hands. Their progress in the last fifteen years has been such that if anyone told me that such would be the case, I would have received it with a great deal of skepticism."⁴⁴ From Hornbroke and Henley's perspective, wage labor elevated some Indians above Chinese and white farm workers.

⁴¹ Ibid., 98.

⁴² Ibid., 57.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 98.

The white ranchers' racial and class prejudices reinforced one another in their descriptions of Indians and other agricultural workers. The agricultural economy in which the two ranchers lived provided templates for comparisons between Indians, Chinese and whites. Itinerant white farm workers had failed in society; they did not accumulate land but worked for those who did. At the time of these statements, Chinese agricultural workers faced a rising tide of anti-Chinese sentiment throughout the United States.⁴⁵ Ranchers fit Indians into Mendocino County's tiered-labor system below poor whites in terms of class, and above the Chinese in terms of race.⁴⁶

Despite the flexibility of racial and class categories, most whites excluded Indians from California's social order. While praising Indian labor, they also described Indians as improvident. Even though Hornbroke considered Indians good workers and believed their way of life had improved, Indians still wasted their money and needed a farmer nearby to give advice.

⁴⁵ For the treatment of the Chinese see Saxton, *Indispensable Enemy*.

⁴⁶ For a discussion of the dual-labor system in the West see, White, "It's Your Misfortune and None of My Own", 282-84. For a dual labor system in Mendocino County see, Pitelka, "Mendocino." Dual-labor systems existed in industrial labor too. See John Bodnar, *Immigration and Industrialization: Ethnicity in an American Mill Town, 1870-1940* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1977).

After all, Hornbroke added, "they are children."⁴⁷

Charles Eberle agreed with Hornbroke. He suggested Indians were better equipped to be farmers rather than livestock ranchers, "An Indian is a person who does not wish to be tied down. A herd requires constant attendance, and you cannot get an Indian to devote himself to it - he wants to have a holiday often."⁴⁸ By these settlers' accounts, Indians exhibited neither the intelligence nor the discipline necessary to become farmers or ranchers. They, like other people of color, required supervision and needed to stay in their place.⁴⁹

On the surface, the white ranchers appeared to provide conflicting testimony to the Dawes Commission: Indians were good workers, but unprepared for full integration in white society. When one considers the ulterior motives for their testimony, the ranchers' comments become clearer. Ranchers masked their exploitation of the Indians behind a veil of reform and concern. While some disagreement may have existed

⁴⁷ "Conditions of Certain Indians," 59.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 16. Philo Handley, a reservation employee, concurred with Eberle and told the Dawes Commission the government should sell the Indians' livestock because they did not take care of their animals. See Ibid., 56.

⁴⁹ Much like slaveholders during the antebellum era, ranchers claimed a person of color laboring under whites was the most efficient and benevolent way to organize society. For antebellum defenses of slavery see, Peter Kolchin, *Unfree Labor: American Slavery and Russian Serfdom* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1987), 178-191; Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll*, 49-70.

regarding the degree of Indian progress, white ranchers held the same opinion regarding the future of the reservation: sell the mountain land and allot the valley land to individual Indians. Ranchers Ira Hoxie and Peter Tuttle joined with Hornbroke and Henley in unanimously recommending allotment. They agreed each Indian family should receive 10 to 20 acres of valley land and the government should sell the remaining mountain land.⁵⁰ Defining Indians in this manner was part of the ranchers' "racial project" in Round Valley.⁵¹ They wanted to break up the reservation, and keep Indians at work. Whether they wanted to maintain a stranglehold on the valley's livestock business or saw avenues for future wealth in a reduced reservation, the settlers portrayed the Round Valley Indians to suit their interests.⁵²

Contrasting the ranchers' views, federal agents and inspectors argued wage labor demeaned Indians. Agents alleged the Round Valley's labor system made Indians lazy and dependent on the federal government. In 1887, inspector Frank Armstrong suggested reservation work "[made] peons out of [the Indians]," because the agent

⁵⁰ "Conditions of Certain Indians," 54, 58, 65, 67, 99-100.

⁵¹ For racial project see, Michael Omi and Howard Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States: From the 1960s to the 1990s*, 2nd edition, (New York: Routledge Press, 1994, 1986).

⁵² See also Rawls, *Indians of California* and Pitelka, "Mendocino."

paid the Indians in rations.⁵³ The agents failed to provide incentives for Indians to emancipate themselves from the reservation. Later that year, inspector Robert Gardner agreed, "[the Indians were] inclined to be industrious but lack economy and thrift."⁵⁴

Agents also blamed off-reservation labor, the same labor white ranchers praised, for the Indians' condition. According to Gardner, traveling to the Ukiah Valley to pick hops or working on ranches should have been the exception and not the rule of Indian work. Instead, Indians needed to work for themselves. He concluded circumstances in Round Valley "depress [the Indians] and cause some of them to lead lives of comparative idleness and dependency."⁵⁵ The architects of reservation policy proposed reservations would prepare Indians to enter white society, but wage labor, according to the agents, undermined that plan. Labor kept Indians dependent on the government and failed to promote the essential values associated with upward mobility in American society:

⁵³ Inspection of Round Valley Agency by Frank Armstrong, March 29, 1887, M1070, roll 43.

⁵⁴ Inspection of Round Valley Agency by Robert Gardner, December 24, 1887, M1070, roll 43.

⁵⁵ Ibid.; Inspection of Round Valley Agency by Robert Gardner, March 30, 1892, M1070, roll 43.

"frugality, diligent work, and sobriety of the Protestant ethic."⁵⁶

Where Indians worked was only part of the problem. Agents also worried about how Indians spent their earnings. Inspector T.D. Marcum complained Indians used their money to purchase whiskey in Covelo.⁵⁷ Sheldon suggested problems from alcohol stemmed from poor whites, not just Indians, "the greatest disturbance in Covelo comes from 'the low white trash' who are hired by sheep men as herders, and to locate and prove up on land." Sheldon explained "low-class" whites imbibed a beverage called 'sheep herders delight' and then perpetrated "scenes disgraceful to our humanity to say nothing of the danger to life and property." Sheldon continued, "They are the ones who stay in town all night, who lie across the sidewalks, and expose their persons so that no lady wants to appear on the streets at such times."⁵⁸ Despite Sheldon's defense, stereotypes of Native Americans as heavy drinkers exacerbated perceptions of their spending habits while simultaneously underscoring their

⁵⁶ Quoted in Eric Foner, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men: The Ideology of the Republican Party before the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995, 1970), 23.

⁵⁷ Report on Round Valley Agency by T.D. Marcum, January 21, 1889, M1070, roll 43; "Conditions of Certain Indians," 58.

⁵⁸ H.B. Sheldon to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, December 7, 1883, folder: Round Valley, Held-Poage Memorial Home and Research Library, Ukiah, CA.

dependency. Indians and poor whites failed to climb the ladder of civilization and morality because they fell prey to the evils of alcohol.

Federal officials opposed the creation of an Indian working-class. According to prevailing attitudes among Indian Office personnel and reformers, Indians were not supposed to be wageworkers - they should be yeoman farmers. However, working conditions on and off the reservation impeded the agricultural development and kept Indians mired in dependency. Agents recommended allotment as the solution. It would transform Indians from workers into farmers and undermine tribal identities. Individual land ownership would provide the necessary tools for Indians to progress along the path of civilization, and finish the evolution from hunters and gatherers to independent farmers. At the same time individual allotments improved the social and economic condition of Indians, agents believed, as they also broke

up reservations and tribal ethnicities.⁵⁹ It was the perfect panacea for the Indian problem.

On the issue of allotment, ranchers, agents, and Indians agreed. But, Indians had different reasons for their support. In 1885, Indians petitioned the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for allotment, "give us all our land and control of the pasture land, and we can easily be self-supporting, and will not ask the government for one cent after we are fairly started."⁶⁰ Indians co-opted the language of the federal government by arguing allotment would make them independent. But they also recognized northern California's economic situation. They would be independent only if the government prevented white ranchers from overrunning Indian land. From the perspective of Indians, the acquisition of land meant they controlled their labor and ability to secure their subsistence.

⁵⁹ For federal support of allotment see, Inspection of Round Valley Agency by Frank Armstrong, March 29, 1887, M1070, roll 43; Inspection of Round Valley Agency by Robert Gardner, December 24, 1887, M1070, roll 43; and Inspection of Round Valley Agency by Robert Gardner, March 30, 1892, M1070, roll 43; ARCIA for 1884, 16; ARCIA for 1889, 126. For studies of the Dawes Act and the agrarian impulses of late 19th century federal Indian policy see Hoxie, *A Final Promise*; David Rich Lewis, *Neither Wolf Nor Dog: American Indians, Environment, and Social Change* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994).

⁶⁰ Indians of Round Valley to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, July 19, 1885, "Lands in Severalty to the Indians on the Round Valley Indian Reservation in California," *House of Representatives: Executive Documents*, 49th Congress, 1st Session, Serial No. 21, 8-9.

Six years later, Indians reiterated their demands. Dan Wright (Concow) told the Commissioner of Indian Affairs the Indians should have all the mountain land to run livestock and added, "I need land from six miles wide from river to river...." for hunting and fishing. John Brown (Yuki) agreed with Wright's pleas, "I would like to say, I am not going to preach, we want to have this Valley land, right in this Valley, we want to have from the river down here, that is where we want to go fishing and hunting and fish come from Hull's Valley...I want to keep for my people good hunting and fishing."⁶¹

Wright's and Brown's comments illustrated the activities of late nineteenth century Indian leaders as well as their ability to co-opt language. Statements about self-support and ending dependency certainly resonated with the Office of Indian Affairs, but they also articulated Indian concerns. They demanded land in common and an ability to hunt and fish in addition to livestock ranching. Indians understood what it meant to survive in Round Valley: controlling their land and labor. If the government provided Indians with enough land to hunt, fish, and run livestock, they would reduce

⁶¹ Speeches Made by Indians at Round Valley Indian Agency, February 21, 1891, relative to the quantity of land which they desire for grazing and timber purposes, Special Cases, Box 59.

their dependency on wages and the government and control their labor.

As agency workers and tribal leaders, Wright and Brown attempted to bolster their multi-source incomes, and address communal goals for Indians. At the time of their statements, Wright and Brown were serving as Indian police officers. Wright began intermittently serving on the police force in the summer of 1887 and Brown in the previous summer. Their insistence on subsistence rights and communal landholding suggested they served the role of precontact chiefs or village leaders who assured equitable distribution of economic resources and meeting with leaders from other groups.⁶²

The Indian's interpretation of allotment - communal land and assuring the livelihoods of all Indians - ran contrary to the meaning government agents and white ranchers invested in the Dawes Act. In fact, Indian ideas about allotment were completely antithetical to those held by white Americans. While Indians wanted to uphold community and tribal status and gain control over their land and labor, government officials hoped allotment would sever individual Indians from the larger

⁶² Receipts and Disbursements, box 105, letterbook: Cash Book, 1875-1895. For precontact chiefs and leaders, see Bean, "Social Organization," 111-12.

community and white ranchers wanted to assure control over land and Indian labor.

The struggle concerning the meaning of allotment and its potential outcomes carried into the 1890s. By the beginning of the decade, allotment was a foregone conclusion in Round Valley. Between 1890 and 1898, government officials reduced the reservation from more than 100,000 acres to 43,650, divided it into five- and ten-acre parcels, and allowed the Indians to choose their own land.⁶³ Labor considerations determined who received allotments first. Allotment agent William Winder informed the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, "The [first] allotments made were principally for Indians who had made engagements to shear sheep who would lose the work by which they earn a little money."⁶⁴ Even though agents hoped allotment would help Indians escape wage labor, allotment agents recognized Indians needed their jobs.

Originally, the allotment bill called for each head of family, male older than eighteen, and orphan younger

⁶³ See, ARCIA for 1891, 50; ARCIA for 1892, 77; ARCIA for 1893, 131-32; ARCIA for 1894, 21; ARCIA for 1895, 136; ARCIA for 1896, 131-32; ARCIA for 1897, 121; ARCIA for 1898, 138.

⁶⁴ William A. Winder to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, May 20, 1894, Special Cases, Box 60; ARCIA for 1881, 17; Inspection of Round Valley Agency by Gardner, December 24, 1887, M1070, Roll 43; Amelia Susman, "The Round Valley Indians of California: An Unpublished Chapter in Acculturation in Seven [or Eight] American Indian Tribes," *Contributions to the University of California Archaeological Research Facility*, no. 31 (1976): 33.

than eighteen to receive 30 acres.⁶⁵ However, an influx of off-reservation Indians forced the allotting agents - William Winder and Lieutenant Thomas Connolly - to change procedures. Many northern California Indians went to Round Valley and took advantage of the available land. In 1894, twenty Wailackis from Hulls Valley arrived at the agency and asked for allotments. Only 500 acres of valley land remained and not all of the reservation Indians had received their share. Connolly compromised and gave these Indians land in Hulls Valley.⁶⁶ Two months later, 17 Wailackis from the north fork of the Eel River approached Winder and requested allotments. Once again, the lack of suitable land posed problems. Winder wrote timber covered and streams dissected the remaining land, and "in some cases to the extent of more than one half [of the section], these so-called streams are in winter mountain torrents and in summer dry rocky beds, absolutely worthless." Winder and Connolly gave the Wailackis some of the allotment designated for the school because they deemed it too large.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ "Lands in Severalty," 7.

⁶⁶ First Lieutenant Thomas Connolly to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, March 26, 1894, Special Cases, Box 60.

⁶⁷ William A. Winder to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, May 9, 1894, Special Cases, Box 60.

As the land requests continued, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs made an unpopular decision.⁶⁸ To compensate for the unexpected demand for land, he proposed giving married women only five acres.⁶⁹ Since many married women had already received ten-acre allotments by the time of this decision, this proposal entailed taking five acres away from every allotted married woman. Unfortunately, Winder received this news while the Indians were preparing for their Fourth of July celebrations. Winder told the Indians about the decision the Sunday following the Fourth, "Before informing them of the order to take five acres from married women, whose husbands had land, I called their attentions to the many and great benefits the Government had conferred on them, and their desire to give them a good start in their new life."⁷⁰

Winder's platitudes failed to pacify the Indians. Some Indians blamed partisanship for their predicament. "The Republicans had given them the land," some

⁶⁸ For other requests see, William Winder to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, May 18, 1894, Special Cases, Box 60; William Winder to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, May 20, 1894, Special Cases, Box 60; William Winder to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, June 27, 1894, Special Cases, Box 60; William Winder to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, July 6, 1894, Special Cases, Box 60.

⁶⁹ William Winder to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, June 27, 1894, Special Cases, Box 60

⁷⁰ William Winder to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, July 21, 1894, Special Cases, Box 60.

concluded, "and now the Democrats were taking it away from them." To quell the discontent on the reservation, the agents turned to the captains for assistance. John Brown, a Yuki captain and preacher in Round Valley, agreed to take his allotment and subsequently the difficulty subsided.⁷¹

Allotment rendered mixed results in Round Valley. Some Indians capitalized on their large families and amassed large chunks of land. Winder complained Mr. Fulwilder brought relatives and non-relatives into his house, and "now has 80 acres of the best in the valley."⁷² Fulwilder made sure he obtained enough farmland to make the enterprise profitable and kept his family nearby. Other Indians struggled. John Brown informed the Commissioner of Indian Affairs he lived on an allotment issued to his wife, Jessie, and Susie Liney. Brown wanted the allotment adjoining his wife's property, owned by Old Con. Con, as his name intimated, was old, blind, and unable to cultivate the land. Brown told the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, "I am Captain of the Ukie [sic] Tribe, and want to keep my people close together, but our Agent, for some unknown reason is not willing to

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² William Winder to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, May 8, 1894, Special Cases, Box 60. It was either John or Jim Fulwilder.

make the change I wish...[old Con] is willing to sign a transfer of his certificate to me, and take land anywhere near me, as I support him by cultivating land..."⁷³

Brown's leadership obligations required that he care for elders. However, the agents could have used allotment as an opportunity to undercut Indian leaders by limiting their ability to fulfill their duties.

Indian women married to non-Indians faced difficulties securing allotments as well. Mrs. Costello (Yuki) and her husband Jesus lived outside the reservation boundaries. They settled on valuable land and improved it by planting fruit trees, erecting fences, and general cultivation. The Costellos wanted their land to stand as her allotment, but Connolly allotted the Costello family land on the reservation regardless of their wishes.⁷⁴ In December 1894, James Simonin wrote to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs a "meddlesome person" told his wife Hannah the allotment the agent gave her in the foothills was worthless and she unwittingly exchanged it for valley land. James considered the valley allotment worthless because brush and rocks covered the land, and he asked the Commissioner to return the

⁷³ John Brown Captain of the Ukie Tribe to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, December 14, 1895, Special Cases, Box 60.

⁷⁴ Lieutenant Thomas Connolly to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, April 10, 1894, Special Cases, Box 60.

original allotment.⁷⁵ Connolly opposed Simonin's request, "His reputation is very bad. So bad that is it that many of the prominent Indians came to me and requested me to if possible keep this man and his thieving family in the Valley where they could be watched." Connolly and other Indians assumed Simonin wanted the foothill land so he could kill livestock and keep his children away from the reservation school.⁷⁶ Connolly and Winder considered these men "squaw men" and believed they were taking advantage of the government. While that may have been the case, these relationships do not appear to be "alliances of convenience." The non-Indian men and Indian women had large families together and allotting agents prevented them from securing title to land.

Once Indians chose their allotments, whites strove to maintain the status quo in economic and race relations. Covelo businessmen attempted to circumvent the 25-year trust status of the Indian land, and threatened to seize allotments to repay the debts Indians incurred at their establishments, probably after the

⁷⁵ James and Hannah Simonin to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, December 27, 1894, Special Cases, Box 60.

⁷⁶ Lieutenant Thomas Connolly to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, December 28, 1894, Special Cases, Box 60.

agent issued the Indians scrip for picking hops.⁷⁷ On August 20, 1895, two men murdered William Williams (Nomlacki) at his farm. The killers stampeded Williams' hogs and cattle in front of his house and when he stepped onto his porch, two assassins shot him. "They just didn't want him there in the cattle business," Mart Hurt remembered.⁷⁸ County prosecutors never convicted anyone of the crime but Connolly accused Frank Doolittle and Sam Botter.⁷⁹ Hurt speculated B.W. Van Horn, John Crow, and Joseph Gregory (the men who killed Jack Littlefield) perpetrated the deed.⁸⁰ No matter who killed Williams, both of the accused parties worked for ranchers who neither wanted Indians competing in the open marketplace nor lose a source of Indian labor.

By 1896, agent George Patrick noticed many Indians had left the reservation. Jim Wesley's (Concow) wife ran away with another Indian man to Sacramento, leaving Wesley with a three-year old child, who subsequently died

⁷⁷ Lieutenant Thomas Connolly to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, June 27, 1894, Special Cases, Box 60.

⁷⁸ Mart Hurt, *Mendocino County Remembered: An Oral History*, Bruce Levene, ed., 2 vols. (Ukiah: Mendocino County Historical Society), 1: 219.

⁷⁹ Lieutenant Thomas Connolly to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, August 21, 1895, Special Cases, Box 60.

⁸⁰ For the Littlefield murder see, Carranco and Beard, *Genocide and Vendetta*, 281-300.

of typhoid.⁸¹ Many Indians left because the allotted reservation could not provide a stable existence. As allotment proceeded, the agent stopped issuing rations to Indians. In a portentous report, Arthur Tinker informed the Commissioner of Indian Affairs "some will suffer" once they became independent.⁸² In the middle of the allotment process, Inspector McCormick reported it was a trying time for the Indians as they moved from dependence to independence. Many Indians were hungry, he stated, but learned a valuable lesson.⁸³

Compounding the effect of lost rations, the agents granted the allotments late in the year. Some Indians had time to plant their crops; others did not. In addition, erratic weather patterns wreaked havoc on farming. Agent Henry Liston reported while the Indians made remarkable steps, poor planting years hindered progress. In 1900, torrential rains ruined the wheat crop and kept most of the Lower Quarters completely underwater until summer because these allotments lacked adequate drainage.⁸⁴ The following year, a scourge of

⁸¹ George Patrick to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, December 4, 1896, Special Cases, Box 60.

⁸² Report on the Round Valley Agency, Cal. by Arthur Tinker, May 29, 1883, M1070, roll 43.

⁸³ Official Report of Inspector McCormick, May 8, 1894, M1070, roll 44.

⁸⁴ ARCIA for 1900, 211; Annual Report, 1910, M1011, roll 119.

cholera killed many hogs, and exacerbated an already unfavorable crop year.⁸⁵

Even if all Indians managed to plant a crop, the size of the allotments prevented commercial farming. By 1895, the agent made 479 allotments with an average size of 8.5 acres.⁸⁶ Ranchers and later observers estimated one needed approximately 20 acres of valley land to produce a suitable market crop and required 20 acres of mountain land per cow.⁸⁷ Farming a ten-acre plot was not cost effective. It required the same amount of start-up capital to farm a ten-acre piece as an eighty-acre piece of land. Indians lacked the cash to begin such a venture.

Round Valley's isolation precluded profitable farming. Charles Eberle noted, "If [Round Valley] were nearer to San Francisco it could be cultivated."⁸⁸ A.J. Duncan also observed Round Valley was too far from Ukiah and much of the land was overgrown.⁸⁹ Poor transportation facilities exacerbated Round Valley's isolation. In 1884, county authorities established a stagecoach route

⁸⁵ ARCIA for 1901, 200.

⁸⁶ ARCIA for 1895, 136.

⁸⁷ "Conditions of Certain Indians," 16, 99; Susman, "Round Valley Indians," 50.

⁸⁸ "Conditions of Certain Indians," 15.

⁸⁹ A.J. Duncan, U.S. Inspector, Submits Report of Inspection of the Round Valley Indian Agency and Boarding School, October 1, 1899, M1070, roll 44.

from Ukiah to Covelo, but only when road conditions allowed it.⁹⁰ Inspectors commented on the dangers and difficulty of traveling to Round Valley during the winter. Thomas Downs, who inspected and managed the Round Valley boarding school in 1909, wrote to his children, "we got in at 3 yesterday after one of the hardest stage rides I have ever experienced...Round Valley is a beautiful spot but owing to the rainy season, which occurs during the winter and spring, the roads are so bad it is almost isolating."⁹¹

The problems associated with allotment - bad luck, poor land, and isolation - forced Indians to return to subsistence gardening and itinerant labor.⁹² By the end of the nineteenth century, many Indians turned away from their allotments and returned to the fields. Federal agents and inspectors commented on this development with disgust. In 1897, George Patrick believed the Indians sank into the "vices of an ancient state."⁹³ That same year, John Lune disparaged the Indians, "the fact is these Indians do not equal our Northern Indians in

⁹⁰ H.B. Sheldon to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, January 5, 1884, Letters Received, 1881-1907, 1884: 1041.

⁹¹ Thomas Downs to Florence and Mark Downs, February 28, 1909, Downs Papers.

⁹² Annual Report, 1910, M1011, roll 119; Round Valley Narrative, 1918, M1011, roll 119.

⁹³ ARCIA for 1897, 121.

energy, morality or virtue." He concluded, "[The] Indians are wanting in energy and are too fond of loafing around the town of Covelo to ever make much of a success."⁹⁴ Lune, though, visited Round Valley during the winter, when jobs were scarce for many Indians.

The years of contact had produced an Indian working class in northern California. Divided by ethnicity and segmented by a job hierarchy, Indians fractured along ethnic and class lines. Still, they maintained many of their values, including kinship obligations and communal resources. Whites disagreed about whether or not labor benefited Indians. White ranchers believed wage labor improved the lot of Indians, but they still needed paternal care. Federal officials argued wage labor kept Indians dependent on the federal government. All - Indians, the federal government, and white ranchers - saw allotment as an answer to their problems (though they asked different questions).

Allotment, though, assured the goals of white ranchers, not the government or Indians. The government broke up the reservation and sold more than half of the land to ranchers. Indians rejected their individual

⁹⁴ Report on Round Valley Agency by John Lune, February 12, 1897, M1070, roll 43.

allotments and ultimately returned to migrant labor and other forms of wage work. The despair agents expressed in the late 1890s was felt elsewhere in Indian country. Federal officials lost hope in uplifting Indians, and, in Round Valley, accepted the role of labor in Indian's lives. Nowhere was this more apparent, though with some of the reform spirit remaining, than in Indian education, the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter 4:
"So I Can Get Work There":
Labor and Indian Education in California, 1870-1945

"Dear Veltha," Stella McKay pondered what she should write to her close friend still attending the Chemawa Indian boarding school in Salem, Oregon. "I will try and take the greatest pleasure of writing to you, this evening," McKay wrote. "I guess you were waiting for me, to write to you, were you? I was so glad to get away from old Chemawa, I had forgotten all about you, but don't worry." McKay informed her friend she felt uncomfortable on the reservation. Her former friends ran around without any parental supervision and threatened to bring her down; people dressed cheaply; and her ex-boyfriend would not talk to her. Stella could not identify what had changed in Round Valley, but she longed to leave the reservation. "I want to go to Ukiah this summer, so I can get work there," McKay confided to her friend. "And perhaps I may stay there for awhile. I don't know whether I'll go back to school or not. But I wish to travel, that's all."¹

Between 1880 and 1920, federal officials expanded programs to educate Indians. Dating back to colonial

¹ Stella McKay to Veltha Frazer, July 13, 1915, Administrative Files, box 39, folder: Chemawa Indian School [1914-1916].

America, Euroamericans viewed education as a way to uplift Indians. After the Civil War, assimilating Indians took on greater importance and Indian reformers hoped introducing Native Americans to the rudiments of the American education system would prepare them to enter American society. Indian reformers and government officials created day and boarding schools on reservations. Beginning in the 1880s, off-reservation boarding schools gained in prominence, based primarily upon the perceived success of Richard Henry Pratt's Carlisle Indian Industrial School.² Yet, as McKay's letter illustrates, the campaign rendered mixed results. Some Indians resisted Indian education, while others accommodated to the messages being taught at school. McKay's letter demonstrates another, less well

² One of the best overviews of Indian education in the post-Civil War era is David Wallace Adams, *Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875-1928* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1995). I also found the following studies of institutions for Indian education particularly helpful: Brenda Child, *Boarding School Seasons: American Indian Families, 1900-1940* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998); John Bloom, *To Show What an Indian Can Do: Sports at Native American Boarding Schools* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000); Clyde Ellis, *To Change Them Forever: Indian Education at the Rainy Mountain Boarding School, 1893-1920* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996); Robert Trennert, *The Phoenix Indian School: Forced Assimilation in Arizona, 1891-1935* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1988); Michael Coleman, *American Indian Children at School, 1850-1930* (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 1993); Thomas Andrews, "Turning the Tables on Assimilation: Oglala Lakotas and the Pine Ridge Day Schools, 1889-1920s," *Western Historical Quarterly* 33 (Winter 2002), 407-32.

understood, aspect of Indian education: the role of labor.

Between 1870 and 1945, Round Valley Indians encountered all aspects of Indian education, and at each institution, labor was an important part of the school experience. Indian children attended day, on-reservation boarding, off-reservation boarding, and public schools. These institutions made labor part of their curriculum and daily life. Indians also used their jobs to resist Indian education. Despite Indians' antagonism toward the schools, Indian labor kept them operating. The relationship between Round Valley Indians and federal education programs was complex and difficult to generalize.

By the turn of the century, federal officials streamlined the Indian education system in the United States. They made schools near reservations (day or on-reservation boarding schools) feeder institutions for the off-reservation boarding school program. However, as historian Frederick Hoxie argues, the impulse behind Indian education shifted in the twentieth century. By 1900, the optimism of the early reform movement gave way to a pessimistic assessment of Indian abilities. Schools, for instance, tended to focus less on education

and more on vocational training.³ School officials in Round Valley and at federal boarding schools acquiesced to the idea that Indians were part of the California working class.

For much of the twentieth century, Round Valley Indian education followed this pattern. On the reservation, Indians attended day and boarding schools until 1914, when students burned down the boarding school. In 1917, rather than rebuilding the unpopular boarding school, the agent formed an Indian public school. Once they were old enough, students attended Indian boarding schools in Riverside, California, Salem, Oregon and Carson City, Nevada.⁴ Meanwhile, white parents fought to keep Indians out of the public school districts. Many Indians who lived in the mountains formed their own school districts. The most notable were the Red Rock and Nashmead schools. This chapter examines the connection of labor, education, and the Indian experience by first exploring Round Valley reservation schools. It then examines student experiences at Sherman

³ Hoxie, *A Final Promise*.

⁴ Adams, *Education for Extinction*, 60-94. As Adams admits, the efforts to create an efficient system of Indian education often fell far short of its intended goals (see especially Adams' discussion of the fight over Indian education at the Duck Valley Reservation in Nevada and Idaho, *ibid.*, 70-82). Yet, these efforts of reformers in this vein certainly affected the way Indian students experienced their education, and is a central aspect of this chapter.

Indian Institute as a case study of Round Valley Indians at the boarding schools.

Indian Education on the Reservation

In California, Indian agents linked labor and education from the very beginning. In 1869, California's superintendent recommended opening manual labor schools for Indians. In 1871, Hugh Gibson erected the first school on the Round Valley Reservation, and subsequent agents lobbied to expand the school system. On one hand, reservation agents wanted to expand educational opportunities for Indian students. On the hand, Indian actions made expansion necessary. In 1883, Indian boys burned down boarding school buildings. In 1885, agent C.H. Yates informed the Commissioner of Indian Affairs he needed a new boarding school, however the school officials waited until 1889 to rebuild the school.⁵

From the agents' and teachers' positive reports, the school system appeared successful. Between 1883 and 1900, boarding school attendance averaged 60 pupils per

⁵ For history of schools in Round Valley see, Castillo, "Impact of Euroamerican Exploration," 114; Miller, "Yuki," 246-53; ARCIA for 1883, 18; ARCIA for 1885, 12. For a general timeline of Indian education see Adams, *Education for Extinction*.

year.⁶ Government officials and inspectors regularly lauded the work accomplished at the schools. In 1889, inspector T.D. Marcum reported the Indian children spoke English very well, and as loudly and strongly as white children.⁷ One year later, Arthur Tinker reported the school children were "all fairly well dressed and seem to be well fed and in good condition."⁸

Still, certain problems plagued school administration. First, government officials worried about the presence of female teachers, despite the important role of women in Indian education. In 1887, inspector Robert Gardner suggested the agency needed a male teacher because there was "agency work that a female teacher could not or would not be expected to do."⁹ Two years later, inspector T.D. Marcum complained Anna Robinson was unfit for her position and, because of this,

⁶ Compiled from ARCIA for 1885, 12; ARCIA for 1886, 47; ARCIA for 1887, 13; ARCIA for 1888, 22; ARCIA for 1890, 22; ARCIA for 1891, 226; ARCIA for 1892, 227; ARCIA for 1893, 132; McCormick School Report, May 8, 1894, M1070, roll 43; ARCIA for 1895, 137; ARCIA for 1896, 131; ARCIA for 1900, 212.

⁷ Report on Round Valley Schools by T.D. Marcum, January 15, 1889, M1070, roll 43.

⁸ Tinker School Report, July 5, 1890, M1070, roll 43. See also, ARCIA for 1881, 17; Inspection of Round Valley Agency by Robert Banister, November 27, 1885, M1070, roll 43; Inspection of Round Valley Schools by Robert Gardner, December 24, 1887, M1070, roll 43; Inspection of Round Valley Schools by Robert Gardner, March 29, 1892, M1070, roll 43; Report on Round Valley Schools by Tinker, May 30, 1893, M1070, roll 43.

⁹ Inspection of Round Valley Schools by Robert Gardner, December 24, 1887, M1070, roll 43. See also Inspection of Round Valley Agency by Robert Bannister, November 27, 1885, M1070, roll 43.

the Round Valley students were not as well educated as students in other reservation schools.¹⁰ In 1895, Indian parents joined the chorus, and demanded a male teacher.¹¹ Even though women comprised the majority of the instructors in the Indian education service, their talents were apparently inadequate for Round Valley's rough frontier character.¹²

Inspectors and agents also complained some adult Indians prevented the schools from successfully inculcating Christian moral precepts. One of the schools' primary goals was Christianization.¹³ In 1879, Henry Sheldon wrote, "We are excessively annoyed, hampered, and bothered by a set of unprincipled men who seek to debauch our female scholars, and it seems almost impossible to detect them." Sheldon explained, "They come in the night, they send for them, sometimes through older Indian women, they take them presents, yet it is difficult to legally catch any."¹⁴ In this instance, older women and men (Indian and non-Indian) impeded the school's goals of fostering morality among Indian

¹⁰ Report on Round Valley Schools by T.D. Marcum, January 14, 1889, M1070, roll 43.

¹¹ Duncan School Inspection, August 9, 1895, M1070, roll 43.

¹² See, for instance, Adams, *Education for Extinction*, 82-94.

¹³ Adams, *Education for Extinction*, 23, 164.

¹⁴ Sheldon to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, September 1, 1879, Agent-CIA Correspondence, Box: 1, Letter Book 6-11-79 to 2-28-82. For a similar complaint see, Lune School Inspection, February 27, 1897, M1070, roll 43.

students. Such complaints fostered support for the development of off-reservation boarding schools.

Inside the schoolhouse, school curriculum emphasized vocational and manual labor. At the day school, children engaged in "Industrial Work" every morning from 10:30 to noon.¹⁵ Boys tended livestock, worked on the agency farm, and performed other assorted tasks. In 1915, the school superintendent gave each male student an individual garden in order to promote individualism. He hoped "by this plan some rivalry can be stirred up..."¹⁶ Indian girls took classes in domestic science, such as cooking, sewing and basket making.¹⁷ School officials hoped farming, livestock, and domestic science classes would teach students the skills and discipline necessary to live a moral, thrifty, and self-sufficient life in the United States.

School officials used labor to discipline Indian students. Randolph Lincoln remembered, "When [the

¹⁵ "The United States Indian School at Covelo, California, Round Valley Day School. Announcement and Calendar, 1916-1917," Administrative Files, Box 36, Folder: Agency Day School, 1914-1917.

¹⁶ Annual Narrative, 1915, M1011, roll 119. After the boarding school burned down, the day school had a difficult time offering boys classes in farming because it lacked the equipment. Attendance Reports, 1914-1917, Administrative Files, Box 36, Folder: Agency Day School, 1914-1917.

¹⁷ Henry Sheldon to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, June 30, 1879, Agent-CIA Correspondence, Box 1, Letter Book 6-11-79 to 2-28-82. Box: 1, Letter Book 6-11-79 to 2-28-82; ARCIA for 1901, 201; Attendance Reports, 1914-1917, Administrative Files, Box 36, Folder: Agency Day School, 1914-1917.

students did something wrong]...they had a lot of these weeds, you know, high weeds. They got some tools and made them grub them out. Kind of clean up the place..."¹⁸ A former student remembered a matron found a girl guilty of giggling and "forced her to scrub the school's porch and steps with undiluted lye." The girl fled the school that night with burned hands.¹⁹ Labor prepared Indian children to enter white society, but teachers punished them with work if they strayed from that path. Such mixed messages probably worked against the success of the schools and angered Indian pupils.

Parents and students disdained the reservation boarding school. Parents resented the schools for taking away their children, and feared the school environment. Reservation schools were breeding grounds for disease. Between 1879 and 1910, outbreaks of influenza, whooping cough, measles, and tuberculosis prevented the school from beginning on time.²⁰ Indians also protested crimes perpetrated against them. According to a former student,

¹⁸ Randolph Lincoln interview by Les Lincoln, 4/9/90, RVOHP.

¹⁹ Suzanne Stewart and David Fredrickson, ed., *A Cultural Resources Survey of the Round Valley Indian Reservation. Mendocino and Trinity Counties* (Rohnert Park: Cultural Resources Facility, Anthropological Studies Center, Sonoma State University, 1979), 64.

²⁰ Henry Sheldon to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, June 30, 1879, Agent-CIA Correspondence, box 1, folder: Letter Book 6-11-79 to 2-28-82, box: 1, folder: Letter Book 6-11-79 to 2-28-82; Tinker School Report, July 5, 1890, M1070, roll 43; ARCIA for 1897, 121; Elsie Allen, *Pomo Basketmaking: A Supreme Art for the Weaver*, Vinson Brown, ed. (Healdsburg: Naturegraph, 1972), 9.

the school matron "allowed her boyfriend, the school secretary, to put the girls to bed. The girls, of course, were embarrassed to undress in front of him. He would 'strap' those who would not obey. When the girls were finally in bed, he would come around and check under the blankets to make sure they were undressed."²¹ Given these harsh punishments and alleged sexual abuse, the Indian students certainly had enough reasons to resent the reservation boarding school.

Indian parents balked at sending their children to the boarding school, but they were not necessarily opposed to Indian education. In 1894, William Winder reported, "The Indians did not want to come to the Reservation previously because they disliked the boarding school plan.... They are now under the impression that the boarding school plan has been abandoned and are willing and anxious to have their children educated."²² After Indian students burned down the boarding school buildings in 1913, Indians opposed the reconstruction of the school and petitioned for a public school.²³

²¹ Stewart and Fredrickson, *Cultural Resources Survey*, 64.

²² William Winder to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, June 27, 1894, Special Cases, Box 60. See also ARCIA for 1880, 10; ARCIA for 1884, 16; Report on Round Valley Schools by Cisney, September 13, 1889, M1070, roll 43; Report on Round Valley Schools by Tinker, May 30, 1893, M1070, roll 43.

²³ Annual Report for 1914, M1011, roll 119.

Besides absenteeism and petitions, parents used migrant labor to avoid education. In 1895, school officials opened the school on September 17 and closed it on July 15 in order for students and their families to haul hay and pick crops.²⁴ Organizing the school calendar around the agricultural work season appeared to be an accommodation to the white ranchers' demands. In the deep South, black schools opened only after they had harvested crops. Nevertheless, Indian families probably welcomed the school calendar's change because it allowed them to spend time with their children while earning money.

Yet, the relationship between Indians and boarding schools was more complicated than resistance. On at least three occasions, Indian children burned down school buildings.²⁵ Whit Ham, a white resident in Covelo, believed racial antagonism provoked the Indian children to ignite the school, "It was after 1900 when the Indians

²⁴ ARCIA for 1895, 137; ARCIA for 1899, 176; Harry Liston to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, November 25, 1901, Letters Received, 1881-1907.

²⁵ ARCIA for 1882, 15; ARCIA for 1883, 18; Horace Johnson to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, February 12, 1909, Authorizations and Requests, box: 83, Book 3; U.L. Clardy to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, May 18, 1909, Authorizations and Requests, box: 83, Book 3; Annual Report for 1911, M1011, roll 119; Agnes Duncan interview by Les Lincoln, 6/17/90, RVOHP; Eugene Jamison, Eugene Jamison, *The Singing Feather: Tribal Remembrances from Round Valley*, Victoria Patterson, DeAnna Barney, Les Lincoln and Skip Willits, eds. (Ukiah: Mendocino County Historical Society, 1990), 32; Allen, *Pomo Basketmaking*, 10.

burned the reservation down. Then they burnt the two schools since. They don't want to associate with the white people. They got vengeance in their heart agin' a white person. No question in my mind that they haven't got it. In 1900, it was those Indian boys and girls that done it, not the older ones. They fired her up...."²⁶ In 1914, Indian children burned down school buildings twice in a span of three months. School officials attempted to discover the reasons for the arson. The suspected arsonists, though, provided few reasons to burn the school besides they did not want to go. Horace Anderson evaded most of the superintendent's questions and offered non-descript answers. Bert Bell, though, stated, "I wanted to burn it so that I could get away from here and go home."²⁷

However, the boarding school played a crucial role in the Indian community's economic life. During the winter, when few Indians had jobs, parents sent their children to the boarding schools because they could not provide their children food and clothing.²⁸ School superintendents also hired Indians to rebuild school

²⁶ Whit Ham, *Mendocino County Remembered*, 1: 194.

²⁷ The Testimony of the Boys Who Attempted to Set the Boys' Building on Fire, January 30, 1914, Administrative Files, box 42, Folder: Fire: Boys Building Testimony, 1914.

²⁸ Round Valley Narrative, 1911, M1011, Roll 119.

buildings. In 1909, school superintendent Horace Johnson requested \$151.00 to pay Indians to saw lumber and perform carpentry work to rebuild the school barn that had burned on October 9, 1908.²⁹ Between 1907 and 1914, Indians performed much of the labor that kept the boarding school functioning. Indians completed skilled work - such as carpentry and blacksmithing - at the schools and sold firewood to heat the schools and fish to feed students.³⁰ In 1900, for instance, Charles Dorman sold 17 cords of wood to the agency school.³¹ In fact, Indians earned \$17,924.69 from providing wood, food, and common labor for the boarding school between 1907 and 1914. They earned another \$4,511.72 from working on school buildings. Working for the schools amounted to nearly 1/3 of the money Indians earned from the agency.³² Working on school buildings and selling the proceeds of

²⁹ Horace Johnson to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, February 12, 1909, Authorizations and Requests, box: 83, Book 3; U.L. Clardy to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, May 18, 1909, Authorizations and Requests, box: 83, Book 3.

³⁰ Horace Johnson to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, December 23, 1908 [2]; Horace Johnson to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, January 11, 1909; Horace Johnson to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, January 19, 1909; Horace Johnson to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, January 23, 1909; Thomas Downs to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, April 16, 1909; U.L. Clardy to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, May, 1909; U.L. Clardy to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, June 30, 1909 all in Authorizations and Requests, box: 83, Book 3; Receipts and Disbursements, Box 105, letterbook: Records of Receipts and Disbursements, 1907-1914.

³¹ Liston to CIA, June 20, 1900. See also Liston to CIA, January 12, 1900.

³² See Receipts and Disbursements, Box 105, letterbook: Records of Receipts and Disbursements, 1907-1914.

their labor allowed Indian parents an opportunity to see their children, and investigate school conditions.

By 1919, Indian earnings and their proportion from work on the schools declined. Between 1917 and 1919, Indians earned only \$445 of their \$8,665 from work on the school.³³ The shift to a public Indian school limited the opportunities for Indians to earn money because the state and county funded improvements.

Indians also worked as teachers at the Indian boarding schools. In 1887, Mary Anderson and Maggie Jones worked as teacher assistants, and in 1900, Harry Liston hired Hiram Kelly, whom Liston described as a "half breed," to be a reservation teacher.³⁴ It was common for Indians to teach at reservation schools. Some made an effort to make education relevant to student's lives and amenable to Indian ways of life.³⁵

Labor was part of the reservation schools' daily life. Curriculum and punishments rested on a foundation of labor. Parents and students, though, used labor to resist and accommodate to Indian education's presence.

³³ See Receipts and Disbursements, Box 106, letterbook: Records of Receipts and Disbursements, 1917-1919.

³⁴ Inspection of Round Valley Schools by Gardner, December 24, 1887, M1070, roll 43; Harry Liston to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, February 1, 1900, Agent-CIA Correspondence, box 2, letterbook: 8-14-99 to 2-13-02.

³⁵ See, for example, Clarence Three Stars' work among the Oglala Lakota in Andrews, "Turning the Tables on Assimilation," 421-25.

They disliked aspects of the school system and used migrant labor to keep their children out of school, but they also kept the school alive with their labor. The relationship between Indians and reservation labor was ambiguous, at best.

Sherman Indian Institute and the Off-Reservation Boarding Experience

Round Valley Indians had similar experiences at off-reservation boarding schools. Most Indians attended the Sherman Indian Institute in Riverside, California.

Established in 1902, the Sherman Institute welcomed Round Valley students from its inception. However, students did not come in large numbers until the 1910s and 1920s.³⁶ Indians and agents had different reasons for sending Indian children to Sherman. The most common explanation was a turbulent family life. Agents cited separated spouses, single-parent households, and ill parents as motivations to send children to Sherman. Ida Soares recalled her father was orphaned at a young age, "My Dad went to school.... And he left at an early age because my father was a child that had a big family, but they all

³⁶ Adams, *Education for Extinction*, 57; Jean Keller, *Empty Beds: Indian Student Health at Sherman Institute, 1902-1922* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2002), 11-37; Compiled list of Round Valley Students at Sherman Institute, manuscript in author's possession.

died off."³⁷ Similarly, Indian officials recommended Burnham Smith, Jr. attend Sherman because his father frequently left Round Valley to work, and his mother could not control her son.³⁸ Robert Whipple lived with his great-grandmother, because his father had died, and his mother had remarried.³⁹ Sending Indian children to boarding schools implied agents and school officials wished to control Indian domestic life. Extended households did not promote ideal families and agents hoped boarding schools would serve as a surrogate family and reduce the influence of what they considered a poor family life.

Other aspects of Round Valley's environment prodded agents to send Indians to Sherman. In the case of Amy Goodwin, agents stated the family's extreme poverty and the poor social environment made Round Valley an unsuitable place for her.⁴⁰ For Amy's second stint at Sherman, agents claimed Goodwin could not attend Covelo

³⁷ Ida Soares interview by Acklan Willits, 4/10/90, RVOHP.

³⁸ Application for Admission to Non-Reservation School and Test of Eligibility for Burnham Smith, Jr., September 30, 1930, Student Case Files, folder: Smith, Jr., Burnham.

³⁹ Frank Goldstein to D.H. Biery, July 18, 1940, Student Case Files, folder: Whipple, Robert.

⁴⁰ Application of Dora Goodwin for the Enrollment of Amy Goodwin in the Sherman Institute, Riverside, California, July 20, 1914, Student Case Files, folder: Goodwin, Amy.

public schools, and needed to attend Sherman to continue her education.⁴¹

Between 1880 and 1945, white Covelo residents adamantly maintained the color line in education. In 1920, school superintendent W.W. McConihe attempted to enroll Indian children in the Covelo elementary school but white parents blocked his efforts. Parents told McConihe, "Indian children are unclean." McConihe naïvely offered to wash the children before enrolling them but parents rebuffed his offer, telling him there was no room for the Indians in the Covelo school district.⁴² The idea that California Indians represented a "dirty" race predated the parents' complaints. Historian James Rawls writes, "According to long-standing Anglo-American tradition, cleanliness as a virtue was practically coequal with godliness; by definition things clean were superior to things unclean."⁴³ During the Gold Rush, whites saturated their observations about the California Indians' diet, homes, and religious practices with references to dirt. "The Indians of California," Rawls concludes, "were thus ranked not only among the

⁴¹ Information Regarding Pupils to Test Eligibility and Whether in need of Federal Aid for Amy Goodwin, May 24, 1915, Student Case Files, folder: Goodwin, Amy.

⁴² Round Valley Narrative, 1920, M1011, roll 119.

⁴³ Rawls, *Indians of California*, 195.

most primitive of people but also among the dirtiest."⁴⁴
In the twentieth century, whites modified these ideas to keep Indian children out of public schools.

Some Indian parents attempted to enroll Indian children in the Covelo schools, but met the same responses McConihe encountered. School board trustee Mr. Tuttle told Mary Clark white parents threatened to withdraw their children if her daughter, Ernestine, enrolled. Nevertheless, Mary Clark was adamant in her decision and Ernestine graduated from the eighth grade in 1933.⁴⁵ Clark revealed the separate and unequal education opportunities in Round Valley to a Senate committee, "There are a good many Indians [in Round Valley] who are tax payers and we are contributing toward the taxes, and in town they have domestic science, they have music in their schools, and we have not anything of that sort at our place."⁴⁶

When Indian children crossed the color barrier, they faced reprisals from white students who attempted to enforce the artificial lines of race. Al Want remembered white children opposed his family's school attendance,

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ernestine Ray interview by Les Lincoln, April, 1990, RVOHP.

⁴⁶ "Survey of Conditions of the Indians in the United States," *Hearings before the United States Subcommittee on Indian Affairs, United States Senate, 72nd Congress, 1st Session, Part 29: California, 15461.*

"when we first started it was a fight...every day. There used to be a guy there by the name of Emmett Spurlock. He used to whip me every day, anytime he wanted to, but I'd fight him. So finally the tables turned - I whipped him.... I whipped him twice every day. Finally [we] turned out to be best friends."⁴⁷

Few Indians attained the social acceptance Want achieved with Spurlock. Ernestine recalled constant fights between Indian and white students and noticed whites selectively ostracized Indians, "when it come to like a baseball game or basketball or volleyball, [white students] always wanted the Indian on their side.... But when the game was over, we went to the corner. That was our deal, we'd go to the corner."⁴⁸ Even when Indian children attended public schools, whites reinforced barriers between them and Indians by dictating how and when they interacted with Indians.

Segregation and violence influenced many Indian children to prefer reservation schools to the Covelo school. Filbert Anderson recalled, "That was bad in them days. I know I was sure against going to high school - white school. I did everything in my power to get out of

⁴⁷ Want, *Mendocino County Remembered*, 2: 257.

⁴⁸ Ray interview.

it."⁴⁹ In fact, Anderson preferred to attend Sherman rather than Round Valley High School. In 1935, the federal government attempted to make provisions for Indians to attend Round Valley High School. That year, the federal government appropriated \$50,000 to the Round Valley School district and provided Native Americans attend the school.⁵⁰

Round Valley's climate made it difficult for some students to consistently attend school. Rachel Logan explained, "we went [to school] when the weather was good. And when the weather was bad, we didn't." Logan explained, "See, we had to cross this old slough. We lived in there and it's a wet place. It's a bad piece of land for the winter. We didn't go to school very much. That's why. My Mom and 'em thought they would send us [to Sherman]."⁵¹ Round Valley's social, racial and weather conditions prevented Indians from obtaining a good education in Round Valley, so agents offered Sherman as an alternative.

Agents also argued students needed the vocational training only Sherman and other off-reservation boarding schools could provide. In 1917, agent W.W. McConihe

⁴⁹ Filbert Anderson interview by Les Lincoln, n.d., RVOHP.

⁵⁰ 74th Congress, No. 113, Elmer Thomas Collection, box 21, folder 20.

⁵¹ Rachel Logan interview by Les Lincoln, 4/90, RVOHP.

recommended Horace Anderson remain at Sherman, "This boy has put in one term at Riverside, and it is deemed in his best interests that he remain there and finish his education and get a trade."⁵² The agent's desire for Indian students to receive a vocational skill increased during the Great Depression. The petitions for Felix Pina and Mervin Goodwin indicated agents wanted these Indians to acquire some job skills.⁵³ In this case, Indians agreed with the agent's assessment. Pina and Doran Lincoln indicated they wanted to attend Sherman because they could learn a trade.⁵⁴ Application forms recorded students expected a brighter future with the acquisition of a vocational education. Pina, Mervin Goodwin, and Robert Whipple indicated they wanted to take courses in auto mechanics, blacksmithing, carpentry, or

⁵² Application of Lawson Anderson for the Enrollment of Horace Anderson in the Indian School at Riverside, Calif., December 20, 1917, Student Case Files, Folder: Anderson, Horace.

⁵³ O.H. Lipps to Donald H. Biery, June 1, 1933, Student Case Files, folder: Pina, Felix; Medical Certificate for Mervin Goodwin, August 16, 1935, Student Case Files, folder: Goodwin, Mervin.

⁵⁴ Application for Admission to Non-Reservation School and Test of Eligibility for Felix Pina, April 27, 1933, Student Case Files, folder: Pina, Felix; Medical Certificate for Doran Lincoln, August 15, 1935, Student Case Files, folder: Lincoln, Doran.

plumbing.⁵⁵ Erla Neafus wanted to take classes in home economics, baking, and nursing.⁵⁶ In fact, Neafus aspired to be a nurse, like her mother, after she completed her education at Sherman. Not all girls wanted to move out of the domestic sphere. Susie Perry indicated she expected to be housekeeper when she finished at Sherman.⁵⁷ Round Valley agents and some Indians were optimistic about off-reservation education. They wanted to move Indian children away from the destructive aspects of reservation life, such as broken homes, poverty, and segregation, and give Indian students hope for the future with a vocational skill.

Traveling to Sherman for the first time was a difficult experience for some students. When students went to Sherman, they rode on a wagon to Ukiah; took a train to Sausalito; a ferry to San Francisco; and then took another train to Riverside. Getting there, of

⁵⁵ Application for Admission to Non-Reservation School and Test of Eligibility for Felix Pina, April 27, 1933, Student Case Files, folder: Pina, Felix; Information Blank as an Aid in Vocational Guidance for Felix Pina, October 26, 1933, Student Case Files, folder: Pina, Felix; Medical Certificate for Mervin Goodwin, August 16, 1935, Student Case Files, folder: Goodwin, Mervin; Information Blank as an Aid in Vocational Guidance for Robert Whipple, September 14, 1940, Student Case Files, folder: Whipple, Robert.

⁵⁶ Application for Admission to Non-Reservation School and Test of Eligibility for Erla Neafus, August 1, 1931, Student Case Files, folder: Neafus, Erla.

⁵⁷ Home Record for Erla Neafus, January 15, 1932, Student Case Files, folder: Neafus, Erla; Home Record for Susie Perry, April 22, 1931, Student Case Files, folder: Perry, Susie.

course, was only half the battle. A new and foreign way of life awaited the children at the off reservation boarding schools. Like other schools, officials militarily regimented Sherman. Eugene Jamison remembered, "[after we got there] the first thing that next morning at 6:00 everybody was told to get out of the bunk, make your bed, and get cleaned up, and get down to the parade ground and get ready to be assigned to military training."⁵⁸ School officials gave each company a different name, such as Tee Pee or Minnehaha and segregated the genders.⁵⁹ Eugene Jamison recalled, "the boys were taken over to the boy's side, and the girls were taken to the girl's side. I didn't see any girls, except at a distance, for all those years I was down there."⁶⁰ At Sherman, Round Valley Indians met Indians from all over the country. Adaline Figueroa remembered, "There was people from all over the United States. From New York.... There were even people look like full Black; even White people, but they came in anyway."⁶¹

The school experience was a foreign and fearful time for some Indians. Dislocated from family and friends, their lives governed, and encountering new people,

⁵⁸ Eugene Jamison, *Singing Feather*, 33-34.

⁵⁹ Adaline Figueroa interview by Les Lincoln, April 18, 1990, RVOHP.

⁶⁰ Eugene Jamison, *Singing Feather*, 34.

⁶¹ Figueroa interview.

boarding schools altered children's lives. Sherman Institute's superintendent J.H. Biery informed Charlotte Pina's friends and family she cried often at Sherman, and seemed despondent.⁶² Being separated from friends and family was often a lonely experience for Indian children.

The labor routine contributed to the students' adjustment to the school. Between 1910 and 1925, vocational classes instructed boys in farm labor. They enrolled in Farm Blacksmithing, Farm Carpentry, Farm Engineering, Farm Masonry, Farming, Dairying, and Gardening. In order to advance in these units, students had to complete a series of tasks in five to ten week increments. In order to complete the Farming unit, for instance, students had to show proficiency in stock raising, plant production, road maintenance, care of implements, and landscaping. In the Farm Engineering unit, students worked with boilers, steam and gas engines, and repaired plumbing.⁶³

In the mid-1920s and 1930s, vocational endeavors for boys expanded. Curriculum offerings included Blacksmithing, Cooking, Dairying, Mill & Cabinet Making,

⁶² L.P.R., Girls' Advisor, to Sister M. Benedicta, April 17, 1934, Student Case Files, folder: Pina, Charlotte.

⁶³ See, for example, assorted Edward Meyers' Farming Record Card, Dairying Record Card, Farm Masonry Record Card and Farm Engineering Record Card, Student Case Files, folder: Meyers, Edward.

Painting, Printing, and Shoe Repair. Besides new offerings, the focus and advancement in school changed from the previous farm-orientation of the schools. Students specialized in certain vocations rather than a variety of farm chores. Eugene Jamison speculated he spent nearly 10,000 hours working the printing department.⁶⁴ Under the new system, students advanced from hand to journeyman to master.⁶⁵

Both the farming and mechanical vocational curriculums harkened to long-held ideas of "civilizing" Indians. Since the early nineteenth century, agriculture and domestic industry went hand in hand in the effort to transform Indians. The emphasis on farm labor exemplified the yeoman ideal: the schools would teach Indians how to become independent farmers. The shift in the 1920s, ironically, reflected to even older ideas about skill, specialized labor, and artisanal work, but ignored the realities of reservation life and historical change in the United States. It was extremely difficult for white Californians, let alone Indians, to farm small

⁶⁴ Eugene Jamison, *Singing Feather*, 35. See also Minnie Card interview by Les Lincoln, 5/90, RVOHP.

⁶⁵ See assorted Felix Pina's Blacksmithing and Welding Attendance Record and Mill & Cabinet Attendance Record, Student Cases Files, folder: Pina, Felix. Anthropologist Amelia Susman reported that students also took courses on citrus farming at Sherman. See "Round Valley Indians of California," 50.

plots of land. Historian Donald Pisani argues large, landed agribusinesses dominated the California landscape, making little room for small farming enterprises.⁶⁶ In addition, learning a trade did not necessarily guarantee a job. As many Indians discovered, skilled workers faced difficulties finding one in Depression-era California.

Indian girls took classes in sewing, cooking, and other domestic sciences. Eva Peters enrolled in home economics classes at the Carson City Indian school and learned how to sew and cook.⁶⁷ As with the boys, girls in cooking had to accomplish a number of tasks to advance in cooking. In order to pass the prevocational cooking classes, Rachel Logan had to cook several specified dishes, can fruits and vegetables, prepare meals, and display good table manners.⁶⁸ In the 1920s, vocational occupations expanded for girls as well. Myrtle Shively learned how to be a surgical nurse at Sherman.⁶⁹

Students applied their vocational instruction to the school's work demands. Boys worked in the school's

⁶⁶ Donald Pisani, *From Family Farm to Agribusiness: The Irrigation Crusade in California and the West, 1850-1931* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).

⁶⁷ Eva Peters, *Singing Feather*, 45.

⁶⁸ See, for instance, Vocational Record Card of Rachel Logan, November 1928 to January 1929, Student Cases Files, folder: Logan, Rachel.

⁶⁹ Myrtle Shively, *Voices and Dreams*, 266.

garden, fed cattle, and built fence.⁷⁰ Boys and girls also worked with school administrators. For instance, Horace Anderson was a mail boy at the superintendent's office, and Blanche Feliz cleaned the superintendent's office.⁷¹ Student labor provided much of the labor that kept boarding schools alive in the twentieth century.

Outing programs also provided opportunities for students to apply their skills. Initially conceived by Richard Henry Pratt at the Carlisle Indian Industrial School, Indian children worked in the homes of white families during summer vacations, and thereby gained experience in white society. As the outing program moved West, however, it tended to provide cheap labor for white businesses, rather than "civilization" for Indian students.⁷²

The gendered division of labor that existed in school instruction continued in the outing program. In 1917 and 1918, Lewis Wright spent summers working on

⁷⁰ F.M. Conser to Mary Eagder, July 9, 1917, Student Case Files, folder: Pete, Sidney; *Indians at Work*, 22-23.

⁷¹ F.M. Conser to T.B. Wilson, August 6, 1914, Student Case Files, folder: Anderson, Horace; F.M. Conser to Frank Feliz, April 30, 1917, Student Case Files, folder: Feliz, Blanche.

⁷² Adams, *Education for Extinction*, 156-63; Child, *Boarding School Seasons*, 81-85; Robert Trennert, "From Carlisle to Phoenix: The Rise and Fall of the Indian Outing System, 1878-1930," *Pacific Historical Review* 52 (August 1983): 267-91

ranches.⁷³ Other boys had similar experiences. Robert Hanover worked as a teamster for W.C. Weaver, Clarence Wilburn picked oranges for A&H Fruit Company, and Sidney Pete bailed hay for the Castle Brothers.⁷⁴ The expansion of vocational education in the 1920s and 1930s increased the number of jobs available through the outing program. Doran Lincoln worked on a construction site in southern California for three summers.⁷⁵ Eugene Jamison spent an equal time working at the J.B. Smith's printing office in Arlington, California.⁷⁶ Aside from learning blue-collar work skills, Indian boys contributed to the growth of southern California's economy. Wright, Pete, and Hanover contributed to the expansion of California's agricultural economy, while Lincoln helped build the metropolis of Los Angeles.

Meanwhile, Indian girls spent summers inside the houses and businesses in southern California. Minnie Graves spent the summer of 1913 working as a cleaner at

⁷³ See pay records of Lewis Wright, Records of Student Outings, box 1, folder: 1918-1919.

⁷⁴ See pay record of Robert Hanover, Records of Student Outings, Boys Outings, 1914-1916, box 1, letterbook: 2; pay record of Clarence Wilburn and Sidney Pete, both in Records of Student Outings, Time/Pay Worksheets, 1917-1929, box 1, folder, 1918-1919.

⁷⁵ Doran Lincoln interview by Acklan Willits, 4/25/90, RVOHP.

⁷⁶ Ralph Johnson to F.M. Conser, June 20, 1929, Student Case Files, folder: Pina, Eugene.

the Glenwood Hotel.⁷⁷ Myrtle Duncan's experiences were more typical. She and other Indian girls worked as live-in servants. They washed clothes, prepared meals, and cared for children. Indian girls and their employers expressed varying levels of satisfaction with the outing program. Nora Turner, the wife of a teacher at Anaheim Union High School, stated, "Myrtle [Duncan] is an excellent girl, and I am pleased with her work."⁷⁸ Charlotte Pina's employers expressed similar sentiments about her labor.⁷⁹ However, some of these work relationships failed. In 1914, Myrtle Duncan left the home of H.A. deWit after a few weeks. Mrs. deWit thought Duncan left after she scolded Myrtle about keeping her baby in the shade. She also suggested, "There is a colored cook next door that is known throughout the neighborhood as a trouble maker." Duncan spent a lot of time with the African American neighbor, "She tells the girls that are working around here that they should not do this or do that."⁸⁰

⁷⁷ Pay Receipts for Minnie Graves, 1912, Student Case Files, folder: Graves, Minnie.

⁷⁸ Nora Turner to F.M. Conser, June 21, 1913, Student Case Files, folder: Duncan, Myrtle.

⁷⁹ Henry Hanze to Donald H. Biery, June 24, 1936, Student Case Files, folder: Pina, Charlotte.

⁸⁰ H.A. deWit to F.M. Conser, June 18, 1914, Student Case Files, folder: Duncan, Myrtle.

Vocational instruction and the outing programs occupations restricted, rather expanded, the post-boarding school life for Indian children. Outing programs, in-school labor, and classroom instruction reinforced the gendered division of labor reformers attempted to inculcate among American Indians. Girls learned how to be housewives, teachers, or nurses, while boys learned the tasks and techniques of agricultural labor. In addition, vocational programs trained Indian boys and girls for the lives they would lead when they returned to the reservation - agricultural workers - though their intended goal was to divorce Indians from the reservation. This did not change after Sherman expanded its vocational program in the 1920s, because the school trained students for jobs that had little or no use during the Great Depression. Eugene Jamison could not find work in any of the printing presses of Sonoma or Mendocino County, and he returned to Round Valley to work on his grandfather's farm.⁸¹ Rather than providing Indians with an opportunity to escape the impoverished conditions on the reservations, Sherman merely provided

⁸¹ Eugene Jamison to K.A. Marmon, September 12, 1933; H.G. Snodgrass and K.A. Marmon, September 15, 1933 both in Student Case Files, folder: Jamison, Eugene.

students with better skills to work on northern California ranches and farms.

School instructors used labor to discipline recalcitrant children. Students disliked aspects of Sherman and violated school rules. Rachel Logan remembered her brother's experiences at Sherman, "He said all the boys wanted to do was fight and he say he didn't like that."⁸² Commonly, students ran away. In 1919, Horace Anderson and two classmates absconded from Sherman. On May 5th 1919, Stockton, California police officers arrested the three boys on charges of burglary. The police apprehended the boys after they broke into a house and stole a coat. The district attorney dropped the charges and the boys returned to Sherman.⁸³ Other students left the school on shorter sojourns. In August 1932, Walter Card confessed to taking some horses from Sherman, and riding them to Arlington, California. Card and his accomplices left the horses in an orange grove and then returned to the school.⁸⁴ In 1942, Robert Whipple left the school on an unauthorized expedition.

⁸² Rachel Logan interview by Les Lincoln, 4/90, RVOHP.

⁸³ H.C. Stanley to F.M. Conser, May 16, 1919; F.M. Conser to H.C. Stanley, May 19, 1919; H.C. Stanley to F.M. Conser, May 22, 1919 all in Student Case Files, folder: Anderson, Horace. In addition see, Records of Sherman, folder: Deserters - 1928.

⁸⁴ Walter Card to George Bromell, August 21, 1932, Student Case Files, folder: Card, Walter.

He and his associates were arrested in an atmosphere of war-time hysteria because they looked like "suspicious japs."⁸⁵

School resistance and broken rules manifested in other ways. In 1932, school officials punished Walter Card for drinking alcohol on a school-sponsored Boy Scout expedition.⁸⁶ A few months later, school officials punished Card for picking on and harming other students.⁸⁷ Mervin Goodwin also posed problems to school officials. In 1936, school administrators chastised Goodwin for drinking alcohol and cutting work.⁸⁸ Maintaining ties to one's Indian culture also brought Indian students face-to-face with the school's regulations. Students could not speak native languages or dress in native clothing.⁸⁹

Punishments for breaking rules varied, but sometimes included some kind of labor. In 1933, school officials assigned Walter Card to a work detail for stealing from

⁸⁵ Report of Misconduct for Robert Whipple, October 5, 1942, Student Case Files, folder: Whipple, Robert.

⁸⁶ Carl Moore to Mrs. Walter R. Card, February 9, 1932, Student Case Files, folder: Card, Walter.

⁸⁷ Walter Card to George Bromell, August 18, 1932; George Bromell Telegrams, September 4, 1932 all in Student Case Files, folder: Card, Walter.

⁸⁸ H. Harris to Mr. Biery, December 9, 1936; Mrs. Clarence Brown to Mr. Biery, December 22, 1936, both in Student Case Files, folder: Goodwin, Mervin.

⁸⁹ D. Lincoln interview; Logan interview.

the school's cafeteria and loitering around the girl's dormitories.⁹⁰

For Indians, the school experience extended beyond the school grounds. Since students arrived from great distances, boarding school life included parents living on reservations. Parents worried when correspondence from their children faltered. Mrs. Walter Card asked D.H. Biery, "does the school allow children to write home to their parents outside of their school letters?" She had sent money, postage and packages to her two children, but rarely received replies. Mrs. Card also noticed a change in her son, Walter, "Up to [the time he was punished for drinking on the Boy Scout expedition] he always wrote such nice happy letter home telling me about all the fun and good things they enjoyed there, then he stopped writing and would not tell me anything about what was going on."⁹¹

Parents also worried about their children's health.⁹² Parents feared for the worst when they did not hear from their children after awhile. In 1918, Frank Whipple wrote to Frank Conser, "I have had reports from the

⁹⁰ Report of Misconduct for Walter Card, May 13, 1933, in Student Case Files, folder: Card, Walter.

⁹¹ Mrs. Walter Card to D.H. Biery, June 19, 1932, Student Case Files, folder: Card, Walter.

⁹² For a general discussion of Indian health at the Sherman Indian Institute see, [Author], *Empty Beds*.

school stating that [my daughter Bertha Whipple] is on the sick list and in serious condition." Whipple was quite adamant about knowing his daughter's condition, "Now if there is anything wrong with her I would like to know. I am one of the parents and wanted [it] fully understood that when I write you concerning my daughter's health I would like to get full information and get it from you in a short time as possible."⁹³

Whipple's and other parent's worries had substantial support. Indian students were frequently ill and school officials informed parents or sought their consent for treatment on a variety of ailments, ranging from tuberculosis to tonsillitis to gonorrheal infections. In many cases, students never recovered from their illnesses. In 1915, Hazel Mage checked herself into the Chemawa Indian Boarding School hospital with pneumonia. School officials searched her room, and found a dead infant in a bathtub next to the girl's living quarters. The baby weighed little more than three pounds, and there were no marks of violence on the body. Mage seemed to rebound from the effects of pneumonia and premature

⁹³ Frank Whipple to Frank Conser, February 4, 1918, Student Case Files, folder: Whipple, Bertha.

birth, but passed away in January of 1916.⁹⁴ In 1919, Martin Johns contracted tuberculosis at Sherman. As the school prepared to send him to a sanitarium in Phoenix, Arizona, his condition worsened and school officials sent him back to Round Valley. Johns died on the reservation in April, 1919.⁹⁵

Parents quickly learned that some of their children ran away from the school. In 1918, Lawson Anderson wrote F.M. Conser, "I have heard from some one around here that [my son Horace Anderson] ran away. So please let me know if he is at the school or if he is working out."⁹⁶ Even though parents lived more than 500 miles from their children, they quickly knew when things went awry at the boarding school.

Given the health problems endemic to the boarding schools and the great distances separating families, parents wanted their children to come home at every occasion. An ill relative or parent prompted requests for their children. In 1914, Charlie Wright requested that his daughter Grace return to Covelo because his

⁹⁴ H.E. Wadsworth to E.A. Hutchison, January 16, 1916, Administrative Files, box 39, folder: Chemawa Indian School.

⁹⁵ F.M. Conser to W.W. McConihe, February 4, 1919; F.M. Conser to W.W. McConihe, February 18, 1919; F.M. Conser to J.B. Brown, February 20, 1919; W.W. McConihe to F.M. Conser, March 3, 1919; W.W. McConihe to F.M. Conser, April 4, 1919 all in Student Case Files, folder: Johns, Martin.

⁹⁶ Lawson Anderson to F.M. Conser, August 8, 1918, Student Case Files, folder: Anderson, Horace.

other daughter Katie had contracted tuberculosis and needed help with her child.⁹⁷ Other times, Indian families could not spare the labor. In the agricultural economy in which Round Valley Indians lived, child labor was an important part of their survival. When students were away from a family, however, some Indian families were a hand short on the farm or in the hop fields.

Once Indian children came home, it was often difficult for school officials to persuade them to return to Sherman. Many students enrolled for only one year. Randolph Lincoln stated, "I went to Sherman...went there for about a year...came home for vacation and I'm still here."⁹⁸ In a few instances, labor provided parents with an excuse to keep children at home. In 1926, the school recruiter came to Round Valley in search of students. However, many of the families had already left the area and were picking hops or other crops in parts of California. It is not coincidental that that when it was time for students to go back to Sherman, students were not in Round Valley anymore. Family and student resistance manifested in two forms. Some stayed home,

⁹⁷ T.B. Wilson to F.M. Conser, March 2, 1914, Student Case Files, folder: Wright, Grace.

⁹⁸ Randolph Lincoln interview by Les Lincoln, 4/9/90, RVOHP.

while others kept children away from the reservation at the appropriate time.

For those students who finished Sherman, life after school brought mixed results. Some Indians parlayed their education into jobs in the Indian service. Between 1907 and 1911, Benjamin Neafus returned to Round Valley and was an industrial teacher at the boarding school. In 1911, he obtained a temporary position as a stableman and farmer at the Crow Creek Reservation in South Dakota. He returned to Round Valley and served as the Indian public school's disciplinarian in 1915.⁹⁹ Mabel Pina had a similar peripatetic life after school. In 1930, she worked at the Commercial Department at Haskell Institute in Lawrence, Kansas. Afterwards, she had a job at the Cheyenne and Arapaho Agency in Oklahoma. In 1936, she moved again and was a clerk at the Navajo Agency.¹⁰⁰ From the perspective of the schools, these students represented successes.

Burnham Smith Sr. and Luther Smith, who played baseball at Sherman, had good careers after leaving the school. In 1912, the Smiths played professional

⁹⁹ Ben Neafus to F.M. Conser, April 12, 1911; Record of Sherman Students for Ben Neafus, March 1, 1913 both in Student Case Files, folder: Neafus, Ben.

¹⁰⁰ Mabel Pina Curley to D.H. Biery, June 4, 1936, Student Case Files, folder: Pina, Mabel.

baseball: Luther in the Chicago Cubs organization, and Burnham played semi-pro ball in Lincoln, Nebraska.¹⁰¹ In 1940, Doran Lincoln graduated from Sherman and obtained a job painting in San Diego, California. However, he returned to the reservation and spent the rest of his life there. In the 1960s, he entered tribal government and participated in anti-alcohol programs on the reservation.¹⁰²

Eugene Jamison's post-Sherman life is illustrative of trends facing Sherman graduates. He took classes in printing at Sherman, but when he graduated during the Great Depression, there was little demand for his skills. "I had no home to speak of," Jamison recalled. "No life at home to speak of, and nothing to earn a living from."¹⁰³ He worked on his grandfather's ranch, but wrote to school officials and requested another year of schooling, with particular emphasis on printing. School officials rebuffed his efforts. Jamison's economic outlook improved after the Depression when he obtained a job at a newspaper in Mendocino County.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰¹ Record of Former Pupils of Sherman Institute for Burnham Smith, n.d.; Luther Smith to E.E. Kightlinger, February 8, 1912 both in Student Case Files, folder: Smith, Burnham.

¹⁰² Follow Up Record for Doran Lincoln, June 28, 1940, Student Case Files, folder: Lincoln, Doran; D. Lincoln interview

¹⁰³ Eugene Jamison, *Singing Feather*, 35.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

Labor and Indian education were intertwined. All schools reinforced prevailing ideas about gendered division of labor - with men working in shops and fields and women at home or in domestic service - and fostered unrealistic and anachronistic expectations for Indian labor. By the 20th century, few *Californians*, let alone California Indians, could make a living from a small farm or ranch. In addition, many of the skills for which the schools trained Indians were unrealistic in Indian country. The intersection of labor and schools also involved Indians' resistance and accommodation to Indian education. Indian students and families resisted the boarding schools, and often used migrant labor to escape the reservation when school officials began rounding up students. At other times, Indians accommodated to the presence of the schools by working for them. Their labor kept the schools afloat in the twentieth century.

Chapter 5:
"Everybody was Self-Supporting":
Indian Labor and Multisource Incomes, 1900-1919

Beginning in 1900, Round Valley Indians felt the implications of a two-headed Indian policy. Federal officials intended allotment to end the need for Round Valley Indians to work as migrant agricultural laborers, but the allotments were too small to support an Indian family. Federal policy was a malicious conspiracy to dispossess Round Valley Indians and make them a permanent class of Indian laborers, rather than self-sufficient farmers. At the same time, Indian education efforts attempted to train Indians as agricultural workers. In the midst of these trying circumstances, Indians remade their multisource incomes to meet a new century. Farming and livestock - both on a large and small scale - represented one leg of the Indians' multisource economy. Hunting and harvesting added wild food sources to the Indians' diet. More important, however, was wage labor. On and off reservation work provided the bulk of Indians' incomes and opportunities for survival in the twentieth century. Meanwhile, Mendocino County whites continued to ostracize Indians. Even though Indians worked for them

in the hop fields, whites refused to socialize with Indians in other social arenas.

Indians relied on a hunting-harvesting economy well into the twentieth century. Eugene Jamison credited his heritage for his way of life, "We learned a long time ago from ancestral teaching how to live, how to survive, how to fish, how to hunt, how to grow this or that."¹ Indian families hunted wild deer, rabbits, and hogs, and fished in the Eel River for salmon and steelhead trout.²

Indians supplemented their larders by gathering wild fruit, "Indian potatoes," buckeyes, pepperwood nuts, mushrooms, and, of course, acorns.³ Cyetta Williams remembered the exotic diet of her youth, "When I was small, I used to eat [army worms]...they were good...they used to fry them and make them crisp and would eat them."⁴

¹ Eugene Jamison, *Singing Feather*, 36.

² For hunting see, Leland Fulwider, Jr. interview by Acklan Willits, April 23, 1990, Covelo, Ca., RVOHP; Eva Peters, *Singing Feather*, 44; Acie Hoaglen, *Voices and Dreams*, 88; Eugene Jamison, *Singing Feather*, 36; "Indians of Mendocino County California," CHMP, 14: 198-99; Dorothy Reid, *Voices and Dreams*, 246-47. While hogs were not native to Round Valley, there were wild herds by the twentieth century.

³ Adaline Figueroa interview by Les Lincoln, 4/19/90, Covelo, CA, RVOHP; Reid, *Voices and Dreams*, 246; Acie Hoaglen, *Voices and Dreams*, 88; Claude Hoaglen, *Voices and Dreams*, 91-92; Foster, "Summary of Yuki Culture," 155; Lorraine McLane interview by author, March 19, 2002.

⁴ Cyetta Williams interview by Les Lincoln, May 19990, Covelo, CA, RVOHP.

Some families traveled to the coast to obtain food. Minnie Card recalled, "In the summer, we would go to the coast...and get food...I would see my poor old grandmother with a great big ol' basket on her head." Formerly, she would have washed and dried her catch, but in the twentieth century, Card's grandmother canned the harvest of surf fish, mussels and abalone.⁵ By the 1920s, hunting and harvesting wild food sources had sustained California Indian populations for thousands of years. This ancient way of procuring food assured Indian survival in the twentieth century, but could no longer solely provide for the support of Indian families.

Farming, gardening, and raising livestock provided another leg of support for Indian families. Some Indians engaged in profitable farming and ranching sales to the agency. In 1909, agent Horace Johnson purchased 10 tons of hay from Edwin Smith for \$124.94.⁶ In 1915, Matthew Parker sold his grain crop for \$156, and Ben Neafus netted \$141.64 for his crops.⁷ The agency provided a

⁵ Minnie Card, interview by Les Lincoln, May, 1990, Covelo, Ca., RVOHP.

⁶ Horace Johnson to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, March 25, 1909, Authorizations and Requests, box 83, letterbook: 3; Receipts and Disbursements, box 105, letterbook: Records of Receipts and Disbursements, 1907-1914.

⁷ Compiled from Receipts, March 31, 1915, Administrative Files, Box 44, folder: Industry Among Indians [1914-1915].

close and available market for Indian farmers and livestock ranchers.

During the 1910s, a thriving dairy business invigorated a few families. In a good month, a family with ten dairy cows made \$100 by selling milk to the local creamery. In the late 1910s, the dairy business suffered a crippling blow from drought, which forced many people to buy hay from vendors outside the valley. This introduced star thistle to the valley, and this noxious weed spread quickly in the rich soil. "It was a dangerous thing for cows," remembered Eugene Jamison, "especially after it became a little bit old, and the thistles became dry."⁸ In 1919 the dairy industry sustained another setback. The state of California mandated a tuberculosis test for all dairy cattle. State officials killed cows diagnosed with tuberculosis outright, wiping out many small herds. The price of a healthy cow jumped to \$100 per head, thus preventing many Indians from replacing their herds.⁹

For the most part, Indian farming and livestock operations were on a small scale. A number of factors contributed to the marginal role agriculture played in most Indian households. Allotments were too small, the

⁸ Eugene Jamison, *Singing Feather*, 31.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 31-32.

activities of white ranchers, and erratic weather, to name a few, prevented expansive Indian farming.¹⁰ Many Indians preferred to lease their allotments, rather than farm them. In 1907, Indians earned \$8,000 from their leases, compared to \$6,000 from livestock.¹¹ Successful Indian farmers existed, but were rare.

Oral history reveals an emphasis on small-plot farming. Ida Soares recalled, "They built their homes, [and] took care of their families [on their allotments]. They raised gardens, they had dairy cows. They grewed their own wheat."¹² Leland Fulwider concurred, "Them days...you had to raise your own food...Everybody was self-supporting. Some of them had two heads of cattle, milking cattle. Some raised hogs. Some raised chickens. Turkeys. Gardens....Corn. Store the corn away."¹³ In 1914 and 1915, 36 Indians raised crops of grain, including

¹⁰ For problems associated with Indian farming in Round Valley see, "Conditions of Certain Indians," 16, 99; Susman, "Round Valley Indians," 50; Report on the Condition of Affairs at Round Valley Agency by C.C. Duncan, August 18, 1895, M1070, roll 44; Janie Osmeyer, "A Pioneer Lady's Story," Martha Bryant File, Held-Poage Research Museum and House, Ukiah, CA; ARCIA for 1900, 211; ARCIA for 1901, 200; Annual Report, 1910, M1011, roll 119; Round Valley Narrative, 1918, M1011, roll 119. For a more general discussion of the failures of allotments in Indian country see Lewis, *Neither Wolf Nor Dog*, 99-105. For the history of agriculture in California see, Pisani, *From the Family Farm to Agribusiness*.

¹¹ ARCIA for 1907, 19.

¹² Ida Soares interview by Acklan Willits, 4/10/90, Covelo, CA, RVOHP. See also ARCIA for 1906, 209; Annual Report for 1912, Annual Report for 1914, Annual Report for 1915, Annual Report for 1921 all in M1011, roll 119.

¹³ Fulwider interview, 4/23/90.

oats, wheat, and barley, but the average Indian farmer made only \$38.43 from his crop.¹⁴ Most Indians grew crops for household consumption rather than for the market.

Large and small-scale farming endeavors required the labor of the entire family. During the summer, Doran Lincoln helped his grandmother Dora Goodwin haul her hay and work in her garden. He harvested melons, potatoes, and onions, and dried corn and beans.¹⁵ Labor demands forced some women to cross newly drawn gender lines. Mary Clark mowed, hauled, and shocked hay, drove a wagon and horse team, and performed other tasks on the family farm. Her daughter Ernestine milked ten cows before and after school. She remembered, "[I was] about six or seven years old then and I could go with my Dad all the time. Finally...I said I should have been a boy to help my dad."¹⁶ These types of activities were common on farms throughout the United States. Men and women cooperated in order to keep family farms intact. Family agricultural labor resembled the cooperative assistance of precontact labor.

Summer-time demands for family labor brought Indian parents in conflict with boarding school officials.

¹⁴ Compiled from Receipts, March 31, 1915, Administrative Files, box 44, Folder: Industry Among Indians [1914-1915].

¹⁵ Doran Lincoln interview by Acklan Willits, 4/25/90, RVOHP.

¹⁶ Ernestine Ray interview by Les Lincoln, 4/90, RVOHP.

Parents wanted their children to come home and help the family labor demands during the summer. In 1918, Frank Whipple wrote to Frank Conser, superintendent at the Sherman Indian Institute, "I would like to have [my daughter Bertha] home this Vacation we need her help I want her home by the Fourth of July."¹⁷ That same year, Minnie Wilburn requested her son, Clarence, come home from Sherman, "his Father isn't able to do much work and we want [Clarence] home to help get in the crops. [W]e want to raise everything that we can and would like for him to come home right away before it gets to [sic] late in the Season."¹⁸ Families who relied on multisource incomes also depended on the labor of all members. Husbands, wives, daughters, and sons needed to help one another and contribute to the family's economic well being.

World War I expanded available markets for Indian agriculture and livestock ventures. William Robertson, a non-Indian, remembered, "There's one Indian there raised the horses around the time of the war...and he went down to the bank here in Ukiah...borrowed some money form the bank on these horses he had up there at Round Valley. When

¹⁷ Frank Whipple to Frank Conser, June 26, 1918, Student Case Files, folder: Whipple, Bertha.

¹⁸ Minnie Wilburn to Mr. McConihe, April 2, 1918, Student Case Files, folder: Wilburn, Clarence.

the war come on they come to buy his horses. He sold them horses, and the Indian wanted his money when they down there. They told him no. They wanted him to leave the money there with them."¹⁹ Despite this Indian's misunderstanding with the Ukiah bank, wartime for demand provided an opportunity for Indian livestock owners to make a profit.

Yet, World War I also revealed strains between Indian agents and Indian farm workers. Agents prodded Indians to volunteer for wartime service. Agent McConihe told Enoch Pollard, "It will learn you to know what discipline means and also to subject yourself to the rules and ways of those with whom you hereafter work."²⁰ By World War I, agents had again changed their mind about the role of labor in Indians' lives. While advocates of allotment wanted to end wage labor, McConihe and others recognized labor was the Indians' economic foundation. Military service, McConihe reasoned, prepared Indians for their role as agricultural workers.

Indians balked at the agent's ideas. In 1919, Arthur Anderson wrote to McConihe and requested his assistance in obtaining a release from the army.

¹⁹ William Robertson, *Mendocino County Remembered*, 2: 148.

²⁰ W.W. McConihe to Enoch Pollard, October 4, 1918, Administrative Files, box 62, folder: 270.

Apparently, the army discharged men who had a job waiting for them. Anderson believed he had grounds for a discharge, "Because I have stock and tools. [I] also helped in the support of old folks at my place."²¹

McConihe disagreed with Anderson, "I cannot conscientiously make an affidavit that your services are indispensable for the reason that they are not."

McConihe explained he acted as Anderson's power of attorney and rented his land for the year. Therefore, there was little work compelling Anderson to return to Round Valley.²² During World War I, agents and Indians resumed their contest over the meaning of Indian labor. Indians, like Anderson, thought it was imperative they return to the reservation and continue to help their elderly relatives. Agents, like McConihe, acted in what they considered the Indians' best interests.

While hunting, harvesting, and agriculture contributed to Indian incomes in the early twentieth century, wage labor was the most important economic endeavor for Indians. Indians earned twice as much from

²¹ Arthur Anderson to W.W. McConihe, January 15, 1919, Administrative Files, box 62, folder: 270.

²² W.W. McConihe to Arthur Anderson, January 19, 1919, Administrative Files, box 62, folder: 270.

wages as they did from leases and livestock.²³ Indians continued to utilize reservation and off reservation work outlets.

In addition to providing a market for surplus farm goods, the agency hired Indians to perform skilled and common labor. The Indians who previously held agency positions benefited from the new arrangement. Agency workers made more money and enjoyed better access to the reservation employment and market. Between 1907 and 1914, Henry Henley, who worked as the agency's herder in 1895, sold cattle and farm produce to the agency for nearly \$1,600. Between 1890 and 1895, Wesley Hoxie served on the reservation's police force, as the agency's herder, and blacksmith. In the twentieth century, he performed odd jobs and sold timber to the reservation for nearly \$1,500. Edwin Smith, who was the agency's farmer for a time, sold cattle, hay, grain, and freighted goods to the reservation for nearly \$1,100.²⁴ The work segmentation of 1880 affected twentieth century economic life. Former agency workers earned more money from the agency and had better access to these jobs than Indians who were primarily laborers.

²³ ARCIA for 1907, 19. That year Indians earned \$28,000 from wage labor, and \$14,000 from leases and livestock combined.

²⁴ Receipts and Disbursements, box 105, letterbook: Records of Receipts and Disbursements, 1907-1914.

The old apprentice positions prepared some Indians for this labor. Agents constantly needed carpenters to repair and build reservation buildings. However, the wages Indian carpenters received reflected northern California's unequal economic relationships. In 1909, Thomas Downs hired Indian and white carpenters to repair agency buildings. Downs, though, paid Indians \$2 per day, while whites earned \$3.²⁵ Even though Indians learned and applied their skills, racial considerations influenced the reservation's wage system.

In the twentieth century, Indians replaced whites in certain occupations. Indians, such as Lawson Anderson, Frank Feliz, Cyrus Brown and Mathew Parker, freighted supplies from the railroad depot in Ukiah to the Agency.²⁶ Indian freighters knew their labor's value. In August 1900, Indian freighters earned one cent per pound of

²⁵ Thomas Downs to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, April 24, 1909, Authorizations and Requests, box 83, letterbook: 3. See also Horace Johnson to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, January 30, 1909, Authorizations and Requests, box 83, letterbook: 3; Horace Johnson to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, March 15, 1909, Authorizations and Requests, box 83, letterbook: 3.

²⁶ E.A. Hutchison to the Agent for the Northwestern Pacific Railroad, November 11, 1914; E.E. Spons to W.F. Sperbeck, May 6, 1915; E.A. Hutchison to the Agent for the Northwestern Pacific Railroad, May 15, 1915; E.J. Crandall to E.A. Hutchison, March 24, 1916; D.L. Ducloo to E.A. Hutchison, April 15, 1916; J.B. Moltoff to E.A. Hutchison, March 31, 1916 all in Administrative Files, box 42, folder: freight.

freight to transport merchandise from Ukiah to Covelo.²⁷ Three months later, however, Indians demanded two cents per pound to haul a boiler to the reservation because recent rains had muddied the roads. Transporting freight was more difficult in the winter than it was in the summer, and Indian freighters wanted to be paid accordingly. Even a ¼ cent raise failed to sway them. Finally, agent Harry Liston hired a local white resident do the job for 1¼ cents per pound.²⁸

Indians performed all of the work associated with the agency's hide business. Indians tended the reservation herd, slaughtered the animals and skinned carcasses. The agent sold the hides to companies in Santa Rosa and the central valley. The hide industry illustrated the connections between agency workers and laborers. Indian cattle ranchers paid the vaqueros' salary, which was one dollar for each head of cattle grazing on reservation land. Once the animals were ready for slaughter, seven Indians skinned the carcasses.

²⁷ E.E. Kightlinger to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, August 10, 1900, Agent-CIA Correspondence, box 2, letterbook: 2-14-02 to 5-08-05.

²⁸ Harry Liston to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, November 19, 1900, Agent-CIA Correspondence, box 2, letterbook: 2-14-02 to 5-08-05.

Leland Fulwider skinned 59 animals, and earned \$110.50.

John Duncan skinned 49 animals, and earned \$93.²⁹

In addition to the skilled work, Indians performed many of the miscellaneous jobs on the reservation. In 1900, Henry Henley, Charles Dorman, James McKay and Jim Jamison earned \$2.50 per day working as interpreters while the agent completed the annual census.³⁰ In 1908, two Indians made four dollars repairing shovels, axes, picks, and other farm implements.³¹ The following year, Indians workers and those who had teams of horses fixed the banks of Soldier Quarter Creek after high water flooded certain allotments.³² Indians were a ready and willing reservation labor force, and kept the agency operating throughout the twentieth century.

A few Indians held salaried positions, but these declined in the twentieth century. Indians tended the agency's livestock herd and farm. For instance, Charles Dorman intermittently worked as the agency's herder and farmer. In 1900, agent Harry Liston leased Dorman's allotment. Liston explained, "I inclose [sic] herewith

²⁹ Sale of Hides, March 5, 1917, Administrative Files, box 43, folder: Hides [1917].

³⁰ Harry Liston to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, March 19, 1900, Agent-CIA Correspondence, box 2, letterbook: 8/14/99 to 2/13/02.

³¹ Horace Johnson to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, November 25, 1908, Authorizations and Requests, box 83, letterbook: 3.

³² Horace Johnson to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, January 29, 1909, Authorizations and Requests, box 83, letterbook: 3.

lease of Charles Dorman to John O'Ferrall, and respectfully request approval of same. As Mr. Dorman is Agency Farmer, he has not the time to properly farm his land."³³ The following year, Liston leased Dorman's and his wife Maggie's land to J.D. Perry, "Mr. Dorman is Agency farmer and Mrs. Dorman is mess cook and their time is full occupied with their separate offices."³⁴ This episode seemed to contradict, rather than fulfill the federal government's aspirations for allotment. Dorman's agency job prevented him from working on his allotment.

Several Indians served in law enforcement on the reservation. Indian police ran into conflicts with the reservation's agent. In 1903, agency clerk Elmer Kightlinger fired Smith Card, John Duncan and Alfred Brown because they refused to bring Indian children to the boarding school. Indian police officers acceded to the wishes of the community, and refused to enforce school attendance.³⁵ As at many workplaces, the demands of the employer and those of the employee sometimes diverged. Indian police officers understood their jobs

³³ Harry Liston to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, February 21, 1900, Agent-CIA Correspondence, box 2, letterbook: 8/14/99 to 2/13/02.

³⁴ Harry Liston to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, April 1, 1901, Agent-CIA Correspondence, box 2, letterbook: 8/14/99 to 2/13/02.

³⁵ Descriptive Statement of Proposed Changes in the Indian Police Force, July 27, 1903, Agency Reports, box 35, folder: Reports: Change in Indian Police Service. For incidents of school vandalism see, Wall, "Gender and the 'Citizen Indian,'" 202-03, 209; Stewart and Fredrickson, *Cultural Resources Survey*, 64.

depended on appeasing both agents and their ethnic community. In the example cited above, Indian police officers used their positions to side with the community, in the process countermanding the orders of agents, who expected them to promote assimilation.

Low wages forced many Indians to supplement their agency salary with off-reservation labor. In 1905, Henry Downs and Billy Johns temporarily resigned their Indian police commissions so they could shear sheep off the reservation. They returned to their posts after the sheep shearing season concluded.³⁶ Indians depended on both on and off reservation work in the twentieth century.

In the 20th century, migrant labor continued to be an important part of the Indians' income. Most Indians picked hops, and worked in all facets of this industry. Al Want's first job was plowing hop fields, "I was thirteen years old, plowing hops with a walking plow and two horses. That's hard work for a kid. I worked from sunup till sundown. I got paid \$3.00 a day."³⁷ After Want plowed the fields, women and children trained and hoed the hop field until the crop was ready for picking,

³⁶ Descriptive Statement of Proposed Changes in the Indian Police Force, May 23, 1905, Agency Reports, box 35, folder: Reports: Change in Indian Police Service.

³⁷ Al Want, *Mendocino Country Remembered*, 2: 258.

"They were practically all Indians. A few whites, not too many."³⁸

Some families stayed in Round Valley to harvest the crops. Armstead Want remembered the Hop Ranch employed a large number of Indians. Many, like his family and Doran Lincoln's, camped at the Ranch. Every evening, Edward Gravier drove his wagon to the Hop Ranch and sold meat, vegetables, and watermelons to Indian workers when the day's work concluded. Indian workers had their fun with the merchant. Dixie Duncan (Yuki) convinced Gravier to call out in Yuki, "I'm bringing good meat. Come and get it." However, Duncan actually taught Gravier how to say, "I'm bringing rotten meat."³⁹ Gravier was the only source of groceries for Indian hop pickers, who used this opportunity to mock him.⁴⁰

Migrant labor broadened the experiences of Round Valley Indians. In the summer, Indians went south of Round Valley to Hopland and Ukiah, and they would gradually work their way back to the reservation. Trucks transported the workers from Covelo to Clear Lake and Ukiah to pick hops and other crops. Phenia Willits hired

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Williams interview.

⁴⁰ As sociologist James Scott demonstrates, dominated groups sometimes use language to resist exploitation. James C. Scott, *The Moral Economy of the Peasant: Rebellion and Subsistence in Southeast Asia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976), 230-40.

Pete Clark to drive her family to work. Her daughter Elizabeth remembered, "[A] Truck took us down over to...the Ukiah area to work. We had to go outside to pick beans in Lake County. So we went down to Lake County on truck."⁴¹ Al Want remembered a similar experience, "I used to go down with a fellow by the name of George Buckskin. He was an Indian guy. We took the train to Ukiah and then we caught the truck going over there."⁴² Acie Hoaglen traveled from the valley to pick hops and prunes, "Used to go to Scott's Valley. They'd just come and get you in a big old truck and take you down."⁴³

Migrant Indians picked a variety crops, whereas Indians who stayed in Round Valley on the Hop Ranch picked only one. Dorothy Reid traveled with her family to pick hops and grapes in Ukiah and Cloverdale. Acie Hoaglen traveled on a truck to Scotts Valley, where he picked grapes, prunes, pears, and, of course, hops.⁴⁴

Age and size were important factors in the work one performed. Because Al Want was young when he began working in the bean fields, he was the sack man, "The

⁴¹ Elizabeth Lenore Willits interview by Acklan Willits, 4/11/90, RVOHP.

⁴² Al Want, *Mendocino Country Remembered*, 2: 257.

⁴³ Acie Hoaglen, *Voices and Dreams*, 88

⁴⁴ John Cook *Voices and Dreams*, 68; Dorothy Reid, *Voices and Dreams*, 247; Acie Hoaglen, *Voices and Dreams*, 88; Myrtle Shively, *Voices and Dreams*, 265; D. Lincoln interview; Armstead Want, *Singing Feather*, 66-67.

sack man came around with a sack and you dump your beans."⁴⁵ However, older workers had the more difficult job, "You'd crawl on your hands and knees to the can set on a little box or whatever you want to set it on," Want recalled. "We worked somewhere around eight hours."⁴⁶ Myrtle Shively recalled, "I think all of us kids picked prunes. Then I think today, did I crawl around under all of those old trees? No wonder I can hardly move! It was great fun for children. You got to keep your own money."⁴⁷

Field workers remembered the labor with some ambivalence. June Britton had few words for hop picking, save "it was hot."⁴⁸ Arvella Freeman agreed, "Oh, I know I hated them hops."⁴⁹ Dorothy Reid remembered, "Hops was the main thing. I know I just hated that."⁵⁰ Acie Hoaglen offered a different perspective, "I didn't like that prune business too much. Too much work. I didn't mind the hops. When I picked prunes, I usually eat the prunes - you couldn't eat the hops."⁵¹

⁴⁵ Al Want, *Mendocino Country Remembered*, 2: 257.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Myrtle Shively, *Voices and Dreams*, 265.

⁴⁸ Allen, *Pomo Basketmaking*, 11; Myrtle Shively, *Voices and Dreams*, 265; June Britton interview by author March 19, 2002.

⁴⁹ Marian Freeman interview by author, June 20, 2002.

⁵⁰ Dorothy Reid, *Voices and Dreams*, 247.

⁵¹ Acie Hoaglen, *Voices and Dreams*, 88.

Those who left the valley experienced life on the road. Wayne Cox recalled, "There was a lot of times we were at government camps. They lived in tents..."⁵² Anita Rome babysat for her friend, Mildred Davis. Rome escorted one of the children near one of the camps when a truant officer stopped the two and asked why they were out of school. Rome told the officer they were too young, and the officer drove away.⁵³ Elizabeth Willits had different experiences in the bean fields, "I didn't pick too much beans... I an' my brother had to keep the campfire going, keep the meal going for the people picking the beans an' watch my sisters and brothers when they were little."⁵⁴

Many Indians disliked aspects of migrant labor. Without the amenities of home, preparing food was very difficult in camp. Myrtle Shively's mother had a difficult time cooking food and canning fruit; "It was hard for my mother because she'd have to cook over the camp fire and they made this bread in a frying pan and cooked it in the coals. All the other washing and ironing had to still go on. They couldn't stop doing

⁵² Wayne Cox, *Voices and Dreams*, 76.

⁵³ E-mail correspondence with Beverly McClure, April 14, 2002; John Cook, *Voices and Dreams*, 68; Anita Rome interview by author, June 22, 2002.

⁵⁴ Willits interview.

that...Mother would can the fruit, even when we were out there - on top of everything else, she would can fruit. Can you imagine canning fruit over a fire? Open kettle, sterilizing jars...."⁵⁵ Indian women, like the white women on the Overland Trail, put in a full day's work, and then came back to camp to begin their household chores.⁵⁶

Lives and relationships began in the hop fields in Round Valley and Mendocino County. In 1899, Elsie Allen (Pomo) was born in the hop fields. Wayne Cox's parents met in the fields; his father managed a pear and hop ranch and met his mother when she came to pick the crops.⁵⁷

Round Valley Indians were particular about where and when they worked. In June 1917, C.B. Harkness of the Valley Fruit Growers Association asked W.W. McConihe if any Indians from Round Valley wanted to travel to Fresno and pick fruit. Harkness promised to pay \$2.50 to \$4.00 per day to pick grapes.⁵⁸ McConihe replied, "I have talked with some of the Indians about this matter but they do not seem to enthuse [sic] very much for I believe

⁵⁵ Myrtle Shively, *Voices and Dreams*, 265.

⁵⁶ John Mack Faragher argues women on the overland trail had a more difficult time than the men because they, in many ways, worked two shifts. They experienced the arduous journey and then prepared all the meals for the men. John Mack Faragher, *Women and Men on the Overland Trail* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), 66-87.

⁵⁷ Allen, *Pomo Basketmaking*, 8; Wayne Cox, *Voices and Dreams*, 76.

⁵⁸ C.B. Harkness to W.W. McConihe, June 20, 1917, Administrative Files, box 43, folder: "H" correspondence.

that most of them are obligated to work in the hop fields and elsewhere."⁵⁹ Economic obligations tied Indians to certain employers. However, indebtedness might be a sign of worker power. In central Mexico, for instance, ranch and farm owners offered advance payments, land for workers to grow subsistence crops, and higher wages because of the scarcity of workers.⁶⁰ In northern California, ranchers may have offered enticements upfront to Indian workers. What is unclear about McConihe's statements is whether Indians paid off the debts. Possibly, they reneged on the deals.

McConihe's statements also revealed the importance of place when Indians considered future worksites. At the close of summer 1917, McConihe told the superintendent at Chemawa boarding school almost every Indian had left the reservation, "Some of them are at Upper Lake and some have gone to the beet eiends [sic] in the Sacramento Valley and others are down at the Hop Ranch, near this place."⁶¹ Removed Indians traveled to their former homelands and met with distant friends and

⁵⁹ W.W. McConihe to Valley Fruit Growers Association, July 2, 1917, Administrative Files, box 43, folder: "H" correspondence.

⁶⁰ See John Tutino, *From Insurrection to Revolution in Mexico: Social Bases of Agrarian Violence, 1750-1940* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), 55-60.

⁶¹ W.W. McConihe to Harwood Hall, August 31, 1917, Administrative Files, box 39, folder: Chemawa Indian School [1914-1916].

family. They felt the pull of their former homelands that the state and federal government had forced them to leave.

Many white observers misunderstood what Indians accomplished with their labor. Those Pomos who fled the reservation in the 1880s pioneered the use of agricultural labor to sustain ethnic boundaries in the twentieth century. Some Pomos remained in Round Valley, but still maintained ties with their homelands through seasonal labor. While traveling to and working in the hop fields, Pomos from Round Valley met friends and relatives who absconded from the reservation or stayed behind.⁶² Agricultural labor created a regional ethnic community in Mendocino County.⁶³ Hop picking allowed families to travel together, create, and cement kinship relations with Indian groups in Lake County and the Ukiah valley.

Hop picking was a family event. School superintendent W.W. McConihe complained parents paid for their children to come home from the boarding schools so they could go out of the valley and pick hops.⁶⁴ Families boarded large trucks and traveled out of the valley as a

⁶² Myrtle Shively, *Voices and Dreams*, 265.

⁶³ For the idea of the "regional community," see Deutsch, *No Separate Refuge*.

⁶⁴ Round Valley Narrative, 1920, M1011, roll 119.

family unit. Want recalled, "We used to pick hops in Covelo and then we picked in Ukiah. That's when we had a pretty good sized family then, my wife and I. We had six children."⁶⁵ Families working as a unit could make more money than one worker, and children could assist with the camp life. Aside from its practical and economic considerations, hop picking was the one time of the year when the entire family was together, especially if Indian children attended boarding schools, and free from government interference.

Indian workers experienced segregation in surrounding communities in northern California. Indians and whites worked separately in the fields. Edna Guerrero, a Pomo who lived in the Ukiah Valley, remembered working in the hop fields in the early twentieth century: "The Indians would start on one side of the fields and the white people on the opposite side, and they would all work toward each other."⁶⁶ Ukiah storeowners simultaneously found a way to make money from Indian workers, keep hop ranchers happy, and maintain the status quo in race relations. They only allowed Indians into their stores on Sundays, when hop ranchers gave their workers the day off and the

⁶⁵ Al Want, *Mendocino Country Remembered*, 2: 258.

⁶⁶ Quoted in Alice Holmes, *Mendocino County Hop Industry*, Held-Poage Museum, Ukiah, Ca., folder: hops, n.p.

respectable white population attended church. For the remainder of the week, Indians stayed in the fields and out of the stores.⁶⁷ When Al Want and a friend traveled from Round Valley to Ukiah, they attempted to find a meal at a local restaurant, but the owner kicked them out because they were Indians.⁶⁸ One Pomo man described the demeaning situation in Ukiah where Indians sat in the balcony of movie theaters and whites banned them from beauty parlors, "They treat us mean around here. In Ukiah, the Indians are lower than a dog. Because a dog can go into hotel and restaurant but an Indian can't."⁶⁹

Similar arrangements prevailed in Covelo. Isolation from the outside world allowed whites in Covelo to maintain "their bigoted little world."⁷⁰ A white woman firmly stated, "If I were an Indian I'd hate every white person in this valley."⁷¹ Part of this hatred stemmed from unequal practices by whites. Indians and whites interacted in some social settings. Whites and Indians

⁶⁷ See, for instance, "Hop Picking in Full Blast," *Mendocino Daily Dispatch*, September 6, 1901. For the treatment of Pomos in Ukiah, see Charles Roberts, "The Pomo Indian Women's Club, 1940-1957: Cultural Retention and Political Activism in Mendocino County," 42nd Annual Western History Association Conference, Colorado Springs, CO, October 16-19, 2002 and Victoria Patterson, "Indian Life in the City: A Glimpse of the Urban Experience of Pomo Women in the 1930s," *California History* 71 (1992): 403.

⁶⁸ Al Want, *Mendocino County Remembered*, 2: 257.

⁶⁹ Quoted in Patterson, "Indian Life in the City," 403.

⁷⁰ Susman, "Round Valley Indians," 47; Pitelka, "Mendocino," 368-460.

⁷¹ Susman, "Round Valley Indians," 59.

sat together at rodeos and whites attended Indian funerals. Other times, whites segregated Indians in public places. Indian children sat in a different section than white children at puppet shows sponsored by the Women's Improvement Club. One Covelo woman even proposed separate swimming holes in the Eel River for Indians and whites. Sexual relations reflected those of the South. White men often had relations with Indian women but Indian men and white women stayed separate.⁷² Former reservation schoolteacher Lura Frati (non-Indian) recalled, "One day a young Indian man and I were leaving town at the same time, so we rode out together. Some people were shocked, they thought I should not be that friendly with an Indian."⁷³ On the other hand, some white men gave alcoholic drinks to 12 or 13-year old Indian girls and slept with them.⁷⁴ As in the American South, whites created boundaries concerning sexual activities. While whites could often cross those lines, Indians could not.

During the fall and winter, Indians found jobs wherever they could. Many worked for local ranchers herding sheep and cattle. Al Want spent part of his adult life breaking horses, "I go out here and get on a

⁷² Ibid., 57-60, 65.

⁷³ Lura Frati, *Mendocino County Remembered*, 1: 158.

⁷⁴ Susman, "Round Valley Indians," 57-60, 65.

bucking horse out here on somebody's ranch or out here on the hill and saddle him up and get on him....It's pretty hard work.... It's hard on your lungs, hard on your stomach and on your back."⁷⁵ Acie and Claude Hoaglen's father herded sheep for John Rohrbaugh.⁷⁶ Arvella Freeman's father herded sheep too.⁷⁷ Acie and Claude Hoaglen followed their father's example and became cowboys. Acie remembered, "Most of the jobs I ever had was on cattle ranches. Spent a lot of time on horses. I worked with cattle for most of my life...." Before working in the saddle, Acie herded turkeys and milked cows on local ranches.⁷⁸

In the spring, reservation Indians traveled throughout the valley and sheared sheep.⁷⁹ Rancher Whit Ham recalled, "them Indian shearers got pretty perfected at it. And they don't cut the sheep either."⁸⁰ Indian workers understood the value of their labor and actively negotiated their wages. William Robertson recalled, "I was downtown and I says, 'Jim, you gonna help me in the

⁷⁵ Al Want, *Mendocino Country Remembered*, 2: 258.

⁷⁶ Claude Hoaglen, *Voices and Dreams*, 91.

⁷⁷ Freeman interview.

⁷⁸ Acie Hoaglen, *Voices and Dreams*, 87; Claude Hoaglen, *Voices and Dreams*, 91.

⁷⁹ "Conditions of Certain Indians," 2, 79-80, 101; Report on Round Valley Agency, California by Inspector Henry Ward, October 24, 1883, M1070, roll 43; Report on Round Valley Agency, California by Inspector Robert Gardner, December 24, 1887, M1070, roll 43.

⁸⁰ Whit Ham, *Mendocino County Remembered*, 1: 194.

hay this year?' He says, 'Oh, yes.' He says, 'How much you pay now?' I says, 'I'll give you \$30 a month.' 'Oh no,' he says, 'I want a dollar a day.'"⁸¹ The tone and content of Robertson's quote certainly sounds like a Southern plantation owner: Jim resembled a docile, gracious, and ignorant worker. However, Jim also knew the worth of his labor. He inquired about the present wages on Robertson's farm and then made efforts to secure a wage he found appropriate. Being paid by the day was better because Jim controlled when he worked. Possibly he knew Robertson worked Indians too hard, refused to provide days off or paid Indians only if they stayed for the entire month. By demanding a daily wage, Jim could better dictate the pace of his work.

Indian economies represented numerous adaptations to northern California's economic conditions. They maintained a multi-source income in the face of changing Indian policy that ensured family survival. Hunting, harvesting, farming, and wage labor provided for the subsistence of Indians. Wage labor further demonstrated how Indians adapted to the surrounding economy and attempted to mold it to fit their needs. Indians actively engaged in discussions of wages, work

⁸¹ William Robertson, *Mendocino County Remembered*, 2: 148.

conditions, and worklife and attempted to mold the on and off reservation labor to fit their needs and ideas.

These efforts were furthered when a day's work concluded; when Indians participated in a ceremonial and recreational working class subculture.

Chapter 6:
Roundhouses, Recreation and Labor on the Round
Valley Reservation, 1900-1928.

The setting sun cast an orange glow over the valley. The workers finished the meal that had simmered over the campfire all day. Burlap sacks filled to the brim with hops - the reminders of a hard day's work - were stacked neatly next to the barn. Yet, the day was far from over. The evening entertainment was just about to begin. As twilight gave way to nightfall, the men teamed up in twos and fours; one team shuffled the slick and tied bones underneath blankets and the other team tried to guess the order of the bones in the opposing team's hands. Players would win and lose daily wages before the night's play concluded. Women gathered around the men singing songs, hoping to inspire their husbands, brothers or boyfriends and help them discover the correct order of the bones. A bottle of whiskey would appear and possibly the stakes would get higher. Alcohol might cause tempers to flare but it also could serve as a relaxing end to a busy day.¹

What is so important about agricultural workers gathering at the end of a day to gamble, drink socially and enjoy the company of friends and family? As we have

¹ This description combines the following sources, Leland Fulwider Jr. interview by Acklan Willits, 4/23/90, RVOHP; Doran Lincoln interview by Acklan Willits, 4/25/90, RVOHP.

seen earlier, Round Valley Indians used off reservation worksites as a place to hold cultural and recreational activities. Indian workers practiced the Ghost Dance, drank alcohol and assorted events off the reservation. This continued in the twentieth century. Indian tied their cultural and recreational activities to labor and the market economy. Roundhouses, sites of ceremonial and sometimes recreational activities, remained a vibrant part of the community's life, and helped articulate distinct tribal identities. Indians also participated in a rich social and recreational life. Indians played traditional games, demonstrated their skills on holidays, and adopted the American pastime, which engaged them in a racial contest with their white employers. Labor provided opportunities for Indians to maintain their culture, adapt it to a changing world, and play.

Roundhouses sheltered Indian cultural and social activities in the early twentieth century. Inside the roundhouses, religious practices dominated. Adeline Figueroa remembered, "didn't have no games in the roundhouses. Mostly it was like sacred dances, songs.

And they didn't do too much in the roundhouses....Not everybody's allowed in there."²

Indians located roundhouses at various places on the reservation. Concows placed their roundhouse on Henry Clay's allotment and activities there sometimes attracted Concows from California's central valley.³ The Yuki located their roundhouse on Ralph Moore's allotment.⁴ Allotment failed to provide an independent living for Indians, but ironically, provided an opportunity for them to maintain their dances and recreational activities. Once Indians received their patent in fee, the reservation agent refused to punish Indians for practicing their religion on their land. Allotments insulated Indians from the agents in the twentieth

² Adaline Figueroa interview by Les Lincoln, 4/18/90, RVOHP.

³ Acie Hoaglen, *Voices and Dreams*, 89; Agnes Duncan interview by Les Lincoln, June 17, 1990, RVOHP.

⁴ Cyetta Williams interview by Les Lincoln, 5/90, RVOHP; Agnes Duncan and Joe Fulwider interview by Les Lincoln, 6/22/90, RVOHP. Adaline Figueroa recalled, "[A roundhouse] was over there...where Bobby Britton lives...Concows built theirs there. Then the Yukis had theirs down by...Mary Duncan's place." (Figueroa interview). Meanwhile, Rachel Logan placed roundhouses at the following places, "[There was a roundhouse] up there on the corner going out to the mountain...Mary Duncan's son...Ben Henthorne. He used to have a house there....And they used to have a roundhouse over here where that mill is, right across from it." (Rachel Logan interview by Les Lincoln, 4/90, RVOHP).

century, just as the roundhouses on ranches had done in the nineteenth century.⁵

Locating roundhouses on allotments maintained distinct tribal identities in the twentieth century. Each tribe had its own space in which to hold dances and other ceremonies. Off-reservation worksites also continued to offer space for Indians to maintain ceremonial institutions. Yuki workers at the Hop Ranch kept a roundhouse on the ranch premises so they could dance when the day's work concluded.⁶

Ceremonies and roundhouse activities followed a seasonal cycle. "[All the Indians would] get together on certain times - the springtime of the year when everything start to grow, like acorns and everything like that," Williams remembered. "They get together and they would, all the older Indians would sit around on the floor and sing and pray and that was for their crops...Then in the fall time, after they gathered acorns, all of their food, then they would have that same ceremony. They would all

⁵ L.G. Moses cites a similar occurrence. See *Wild West Shows and the Images of American Indians, 1883-1923* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996), 253 and Clyde Ellis, "'We Don't Want Your Rations, We Want this Dance': The Changing Use of Song and Dance on the Southern Plains," *Western Historical Quarterly* 30 (Summer 1999), 141.

⁶ Stewart and Fredrickson, *Cultural Resources Survey*, 77.

get around in the house and pray and sing."⁷ Adaline Figueroa concurred, "They had song[s] for...food. Different food. Bless it. That's the way they would sing...[The Acorn song was] to purify it. To make it grow....Just like doctoring it up."⁸ Indians performed ceremonies and songs to ensure a good crop and maintain balance in their world. The acorn songs, and others, would ensure good gardens and a plentiful acorn harvest.

A closer examination into Concow ceremonies reveals the seasonal nature of their ceremonial activities and well as religious syncretism. At Easter, the Concows celebrated their rejuvenation ceremony. Minnie Fulwider explained, "Easter Sunday was given to the Concow long ago. It was the occasion of the Feather Dance."⁹ By 1920, the Concows altered their ceremony, conflating traditional norms with Passover. Concows cooked acorn soup and then spread it on their door mantles. Annie Feliz elaborated, "If you don't put that mark on and go outside and make baskets it will be bad luck. It is against the rule. The devil will come along and take one

⁷ Williams interview.

⁸ Figueroa interview.

⁹ Quoted in Helen Roberts, *Concow-Maidu Indians of Round Valley-1926* (Chico: Association for Northern California Records and Research, 1980), 1.

along with him and that's death."¹⁰ As with other Indians, those in Round Valley blended Indian and non-Indian religious beliefs and traditions to create a new ceremony.¹¹

In July, the Concows gave a summer feast called the fish dinner and dance. Dance leaders charged people who attended the dance and dinner a fee in beads.¹² Every Fourth of July, Eva Peters and her family traveled to the Fish Camp on the Eel River and caught summer salmon.¹³ In October and November, the Concows held a death ceremony called the Quail dance. Tribal members camped near the graveyard and burned goods for their dead relatives. The Duck dance followed in November. This dance initiated new dancers and young women participated in a pre-menstruation ceremony. Finally, a winter dance coincided with Christmas.¹⁴ The Concow showed the vitality and permanence of many tribal institutions well into the 1920s.¹⁵

¹⁰ Ibid., 2.

¹¹ For instance, Kenneth Morrison posited Native peoples combined Christian symbols with native ones to create a new and distinctive native religion to combat the maelstrom of post-contact life. "Baptism and Alliance: The Symbolic Mediations of Religious Syncretism," *Ethnohistory* 37 (Fall 1990): 416-37.

¹² Ibid., 13-15.

¹³ Peters, *Singing Feather*, 44.

¹⁴ Roberts, *Concow-Maidu*, 19-26.

¹⁵ Ibid., 1. Susman, "Round Valley Indians," 36.

Indians held important dances on the Fourth of July and Christmas. In 1922, anthropologist Alfred Kroeber wrote to Round Valley agent W.W. McConihe, "If the Round Valley Indians are to hold an Indian dance about the fourth of July, as they have some times done in the past, I should appreciate your advising me of the fact as we have some students here desirous of witnessing same."¹⁶ McConihe replied, "I have to inform you that from latest report there will be no dance here. As a matter of fact they only have a little dance among the very old folks."¹⁷ McConihe understated the importance and resonance of Fourth of July dances. Until the 1930s, Indians held a dance on the Fourth of July, which coincided with other holiday activities.¹⁸

From most descriptions, it appears Indians practiced a form of the Bole-Marú or Feather Dance in roundhouses. The Bole-Marú began in late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and spread throughout northern California. Bole-Marú preachers advocated moral and social change. They asked adherents to surrender drinking, fighting, and

¹⁶ Alfred Kroeber to Superintendent, Round Valley Reservation, June 22, 1922, CU-23, Box 127, folder: Round Valley Reservation.

¹⁷ W.W. McConihe to Alfred Kroeber, July 3, 1922, CU-23, Box 127, folder: Round Valley Reservation.

¹⁸ *Covelo Review*, June 28, 1905; Annual Report for 1916, Annual Report for 1917, Annual Report for 1918 and Annual Report for 1922 all in M1011, roll 119; Susman, "Round Valley Indians," 36.

stealing. Thus, it attempted to overcome internal divisions, and the inimical aspects of alcohol. In northern California, Indians purchased dance regalia from other tribes, used it, and then sold the feathers and assorted garments to Indians yet to receive the message.

Much like the spread of the Earth Lodge Religion, agricultural labor facilitated the Bole-Marú's spread, and its successor the Big Head religion, throughout northern California. Many Round Valley Indians encountered the religion in the Ukiah Valley while picking hops. In addition, Little Toby stated, "They danced in the sweat house near the hop ranch in Round Valley, but they could dance outdoors or anywhere."¹⁹ Thus, agricultural labor provided streams in which the message was disseminated and locations where Indians practiced the ceremonies.

The oral history of Round Valley likewise demonstrates similarities with the Bole-Marú. Rachel Logan recalled, "They danced...with feathers and jump around...I see them dance around that way and they were singing Yuki songs. [The] Indian dance was [a] Yuki dance..."²⁰ Logan's assertion the dances and songs were Yuki can be linked to Ralph Moore's role in the Bole-Marú.

¹⁹ DuBois, "1870 Ghost Dance," 107-9, 119-20, 133-36, quote p. 120.

²⁰ Logan interview.

He led Bole-Mary dances in Round Valley. In 1915, Moore had a dream of the feather dance and his uncle Jeff Davis (a Stonyford Pomo) taught him the ceremony.²¹ Given Moore's role as Yuki leader, it is not surprising Logan associated the Bole-Marú with the Yuki.

Leland Fulwider's mother also participated in the Bole-Marú, "my mother use to [participate in those ceremonies]. They call her down to dance in Sulphur Bank and they had that big hole in the ground there, and people from all over the place." Furthermore, Fulwider related there were eligibility requirements for dances.²² Ralph Moore stated one had to dream before they could become part of the Bole-Marú. Leland's mother's role in the Bole-Marú attests to the pecuniary aspects of the religion. For instance, Indians paid Ralph Moore to lead the dance, "If people hire you to put on a Bole dance, the dreamer has to ask the spirit if it is all right."²³ Spiritual knowledge, then, provided an opportunity for employment. Certain Indians earned money while leading these dances, as long as they had the right dream. Little Toby disagreed with this interpretation. He said of Ralph Moore, "He danced at Ukiah two or three years

²¹ DuBois, "1870 Ghost Dance," 107-8.

²² Fulwider interview.

²³ DuBois, "1870 Ghost Dance," 108.

ago, but it was just for hire." Toby suggested taking money for the dance somehow lessened its impact.²⁴

Dances and ceremonies offered Indians opportunities to redistribute wealth. On one hand, hiring Moore and others to lead the dances was a way to give money to spiritual leaders. Adaline Figueroa also remembered, "I and Melvin Majors, we used to dance at these powwows. We had a lot of money at that time...kids would just go for the money. Them days, we didn't know nothing about money, but I'd see monies, silvers, and greenbacks just covered they'd throw in there."²⁵ As some scholars have argued, powwows and modern Indian dances offer opportunities to redistribute wealth, help the less fortunate, and reward those who perform essential roles in tribal society.²⁶

Roundhouses and their ceremonies attested to the role and perseverance of Indian leaders. As noted above, Ralph Moore and Henry Clay were important spiritual leaders. Cyetta Williams recalled, "they used to meet [at Ralph Moore's] for the ceremonies and that's where they used to pray and everything."²⁷ Acie Hoaglen

²⁴ Ibid., 107.

²⁵ Figueroa interview.

²⁶ See John H. Moore, "How Giveaways and Pow-wows Redistribute the Means of Subsistence," in *The Political Economy of North American Indians*, John H. Moore, ed. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1993), 214-39.

²⁷ Williams interview.

remembered Clay's role among the Concow, "Henry Clay, he used to put [dances] on," he said. "They'd have a big Indian dance...The people used to come from all over to dance. Not only just these people, they'd be Indians from Chico, Paskenta, all around."²⁸ Other spiritual leaders emerged from oral histories. Hoaglen added, "There's an old guy used to be, Austin McLean [sic], they called him, he was Concow. He used to learn most of the people how to dance and sing..."²⁹ Indians remembered Ben White represented the Wailacki at dances and roundhouse events.³⁰ For the Yuki, George "Buckskin" Moore, Eben Tillotson and Frank Logan worked with Ralph Moore.³¹ In addition to Henry Clay and Austin McLane, Emma Fulwider and Jim Stevens led Concow ceremonies.³² Pit River Willie represented his tribe.³³ Jim McGetric represented the Nomlacki.³⁴ Jim McKay led Wailacki dances.³⁵

Dance leaders and roundhouses underscored tribal divisions and perpetuated the survival of each tribal group in the twentieth century. Dance leaders and roundhouses connected Indians of the same ethnicity to a

²⁸ Acie Hoaglen, *Voices and Dreams*, 89.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Duncan and Fulwider interview; Figueroa interview.

³¹ Fulwider interview; Figueroa interview.

³² Figueroa interview; Randolph Lincoln interview by Les Lincoln, 4/9/90, RVOHP.

³³ Williams interview.

³⁴ Fulwider interview.

³⁵ *Covelo Review*, July 12, 1905.

common past. Each tribe had a different history, worldview and way of life. Ceremonial spaces (roundhouses) and leaders linked these Indians to that past, and Indians connected to these places through the market economy and wage labor. Whether at the Hop Ranch or on an allotment, Indians innovatively used the commodification of land to enhance tribal and Indian ethnicities.³⁶

Indian doctors and leaders did more than lead dances and maintain the roundhouses. While he worked on the Hop Ranch in Covelo, Ralph Moore led the Yuki "Devil Society," and taught people how to concoct poisons. The Yuki poison doctor (*iwil-hitltát*) learned the skills and knowledge from an elder poison doctor. It was a position shrouded in secrecy and rumor. Few, if any, poison doctors openly proclaimed they were poison doctors and Indians sometimes accused recluses of being poisoners.³⁷ Yukis used the poison doctor to exact revenge on enemies. They hired poison doctors for a high fee, and the doctor "poisoned" the victim by direct contact, placing poison

³⁶ Figueroa interview; Fulwider interview. Warren Metcalf suggests finding the ties between social connectedness and common history and identity. See, "Lambs of Sacrifice: Termination, the Mixed-Blood Utes, and the Problem of Indian Identity," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 64 (Fall 1996): 342.

³⁷ Mabel McKay (Pomo), for instance, remembered many Indians accused her of being a poison doctor because she was a stranger and practiced unique religious practices. Greg Sarris, *Mabel McKay: Weaving the Dream* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).

in food, or a ceremony.³⁸ If Moore was a poison doctor and rather than just being suspected of it, he used the workplace to pass on tribal spiritual knowledge. It is also likely he conducted the poison rituals at the Hop Ranch, rather than on his allotment, to keep his identity a secret.³⁹

The antithesis of the poison doctor was the singing doctor (*hilyu-lit*). Like the poison doctor, singing doctors learned their skills and knowledge from another doctor. Indians called upon them to cure poisons and fright.⁴⁰ A third class of doctors, shamans (*lamšimi*), cured certain illnesses but received their power from a vision. They typically cured people by sucking the foreign objects from the ill.⁴¹ Cyetta Williams' mother sent her to Pit River Willie when she was sick.⁴² Elsie Allen had a similar experience with an Indian doctor in the Ukiah Valley. When she contracted measles, her mother sent for an Indian doctor. He drank the blood of a turtle and then threw it on the fire. This cured Allen's illness.⁴³ Other Indians performed acts

³⁸ Foster, "Summary of Yuki Culture," 216-28; Miller, *Ukomno'M*, 25.

³⁹ Figueroa interview; Fulwider interview; Duncan and Fulwider interview.

⁴⁰ Foster, "Summary of Yuki Culture," 217.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 212-16.

⁴² Williams interview.

⁴³ Allen, *Pomo Basketmaking*, 9.

resembling those of doctors. Donald Fulwider was crippled when he was young. "Years and years he suffer," explained Agnes Duncan. "[F]inally one day...He took looking [for a] glass and everything in there; solution and...strong stuff and everything, razor blades...He worked a bone out, rotten one. They say that fella is a devil...Matter run from it and oh it smell. So careless, and...after that bone come out and it run for awhile, bout a month, and then it quit and it never come back no more."⁴⁴

Besides their curative abilities, Indian leaders practiced the art of divination. Randolph Lincoln once observed Jim Stevens looking for lost tribal members, "He sang one thing and another. He had these rattlers. He'd rattle them and sing, and everyone quiet, he was going to talk to the spirit, to find out where this person was." After the ceremony, Stevens claimed he knew the woman was alive, but was unsure about where she lived. Lincoln concluded, "He could feel it with his spirit."⁴⁵

Many scholars characterize Round Valley Indians as homogeneous and unified, but ceremonies confirmed tribal identities in Round Valley. Anthropologist Virginia

⁴⁴ Duncan interview.

⁴⁵ R. Lincoln interview.

Miller contends the Yuki had lost their tribal identity by the turn of the twentieth century, and "blended into anonymity with the remnants of seven other tribes."⁴⁶

This claim persists in scholarly research. Sociologist Joane Nagel writes, "The Yuki tribe was absorbed into the composite 'Covelo Indian Community' of the Round Valley Reservation."⁴⁷ However, the historical record suggests racial and ethnic relations were, and continue to be, more complicated than these scholars have argued.

Many Round Valley Indians recognized Indians fractured along tribal lines. Wayne Cox observed, "The Nomlakis don't like the Wailakis and the Wailakis don't like the Yukis and the Yukis don't like the Pomos and the Pomos don't like the Pitt Rivers and the Pitt Rivers don't like the Concows..."⁴⁸ Adaline Figueroa concurred with Cox's general statements, "There was a lot of bad blood between the tribes. Oh yeah. Just like today. We had a lot of bad feelings. I mean if they had anything against you, they took it out right now. No law. You

⁴⁶ Virginia Miller, "The Changing Role of the Chief on a California Indian Reservation," *American Indian Quarterly* 13 (Fall 1989): 447.

⁴⁷ Joane Nagel, *American Indian Ethnic Renewal: Red Power and the Resurgence of Identity and Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 188. See also, Russell Thornton, *American Indian Holocaust and Survival: A Population History Since 1492* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987), 200-04; Patterson, et al, *Singing Feather*.

⁴⁸ Wayne Cox, *Voices and Dreams*, 82.

know, get rid of you one way or another."⁴⁹ Cyetta Williams recalled the living conditions in the valley, "They called it Headquarters and they called this Low Quarters, so I was from Low Quarters. The other tribes, like the Concow and all of them were from Headquarters. I never did go up there until I grewed up."⁵⁰ Non-Indians recognized the internal divisions as well. William Robertson stated, "They weren't all just local Indians. Well, they'd come in tribes. The different tribes then, when they'd come together, there'd be a big fight. So they kept apart all the time. A tribe over here and a tribe over there and a tribe over here. They couldn't get along very well."⁵¹ Anthropologist Amelia Susman and local whites witnessed squabbles between tribal members, "Whenever a good row is on, with a bottle thrown in, it's Wailacki against Concow, same as ever."⁵²

Tribes used the market economy to advance communal goals and maintain tribal identities. In 1907, Concows formed the Concow Cemetery Association, approached school superintendent Horace Johnson, and proposed purchasing an allotment, which they would use as a cemetery.⁵³ Oral

⁴⁹ Figueroa interview.

⁵⁰ Williams interview.

⁵¹ William Robertson, *Mendocino County Remembered*, 2: 148.

⁵² Susman, "Round Valley Indians," 56.

⁵³ ARCIA for 1907, 19.

tradition reveals the impetus behind this request. From the time of their removal to Round Valley until the early twentieth century, the Concow buried their dead at Pinegrove cemetery; however one time "a Wailaki man and a Konkow man got in a fight and the Wailaki killed the Konkow. After a while, the Wailaki man died and was buried at Pine Grove. The Konkow people got mad and no longer buried [their dead] there."⁵⁴ On April 19, 1909, the Concow Cemetery Association purchased Eva Brown's allotment, and used it for a cemetery site, now known as the Headquarters cemetery.⁵⁵ The Concow's efforts to maintain tribal divisions still resonate in Round Valley. There are at least five cemeteries in the valley. One, the Valley View cemetery, is for the area's white population, and is a lingering reminder of segregation in Round Valley. The other four still possess their tribal connections. Anita Rome explained that cemeteries retained their tribal connections: the Pinegrove cemetery is for the Wailacki, the Headquarters cemetery is for the Concow, and the Nomlacki cemetery is for the Nomlacki. The Yuki had a cemetery at the foothills, but a white

⁵⁴ Stewart and Fredrickson, *Cultural Resources Survey*, 79-80.

⁵⁵ Report on Application for Patent in Fee for Eva Vallely (Brown), January, 1922, RV-224.

resident prevented them from visiting the place.⁵⁶ In the twentieth century, cemeteries indicated ethnic and racial division. The purchase of land for cemeteries reveals yet another use for wages earned in the market economy.

At other times, ceremonies provided Indians with opportunities to overcome their differences. As mentioned above, one aspect of the Bole-Marú was pan-Indian unity. Apparently, some Indians took this to heart. Randolph Lincoln remembered many tribes dancing at roundhouses.⁵⁷ Leland Fulwider recalled, "Wailackis came in and danced with [the Yukis] and the Nomlackis came across. They danced with these people."⁵⁸ Adaline Figueroa offered a similar description, "The Wailackis and the Concows danced together and the Yukis and Nomlackis cause they used to come over the hill."⁵⁹ Dances, like the Bole-Marú, sought to alleviate cross-tribal cleavages. The Concow and Wailacki, as mentioned above, clashed and the Bole-Marú may have partly healed those wounds. The Yuki and Nomlacki were enemies dating to before contact with Americans, and the religion may have had a similar impact as with them. Ironically, Indians entered the roundhouses to preserve their

⁵⁶ Anita Rome interview by author, June 21, 2002.

⁵⁷ R. Lincoln interview.

⁵⁸ Fulwider interview.

⁵⁹ Figueroa interview.

cultural and religious traditions, and to emphasize Indian unity.

Indians also assembled to participate in an amalgam of Indian games and recreational activities. It appears whenever there was a break in work, Indians participated in leisure activities. Eva Peters and her family came to Covelo from Hulls Valley every Saturday. They brought food, had a picnic, and played horseshoes and baseball.⁶⁰ According to Leland Fulwider, ration day provided an opportunity for Indians to congregate, "Certain days a big pack train coming down up there by Medicine Peak. All the Wailackis coming in. They going for the rations, get all the goodies. Then they get ready to gamble. They do a lot of gambling, come in to gambling."⁶¹ Agnes Duncan agreed, "Mama said they used to gather at that old church and play games and issue out meat."⁶²

As with roundhouse celebrations, Indians participated in recreational activities on American holidays. The Fourth of July was an immensely popular event for Indians and whites. William Robertson, a non-Indian, remembered, "Fourth of July was the biggest celebration. Everything was turned out...everybody around

⁶⁰ Eva Peters, *Singing Feather*, 45.

⁶¹ Fulwider interview.

⁶² Duncan and Fulwider interview.

these valleys was there, Indians and all. They had a barbeque and people would bring food too."⁶³

Indians participated in their recreational activities at the worksite itself. After a day's work concluded, Indians played gambling games, consumed alcohol, and participated in other sports. Leland Fulwider remembered, "the grass game players, everybody wanted them and then they would like hop season time come up in and bring a big old truck, hard wheel trucks. They would take them to Ukiah, Lake County and all around there, end up gambling, after they finish work, they'd play grass game."⁶⁴

At these selected leisure times, Indians borrowed from white Americans and maintained older leisure activities. For instance, Indians gambled, the most popular gambling game being grass game. Anthropologists agreed Indians played grass game before the arrival of Americans, but disagreed about which tribes played it. George Foster suggested the grass game was an important

⁶³ William Robertson, *Mendocino County Remembered*, 2: 147. See also ARCIA for 1900, 211; Harry Liston to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, August 6, 1900, Agent-CIA Correspondence, book 2, letterbook: 8-14-99 to 2-13-02; *Covelo Review*, June 28, 1905 and July 12, 1905; Annual Report for 1916, Annual Report for 1918 both in M1011, roll 119; Beulah Lovell Reed, *Mendocino County Remembered*, 2: 138; Elsie Pimental, *Mendocino County Remembered*, 2: 116; Dorothy Reid, *Voices and Dreams*, 247.

⁶⁴ Fulwider interview. See also D. Lincoln interview; Armstead Want, *Singing Feather*, 66; Myrtle Shively, *Voices and Dreams*, 266; Annual Report for 1916 and Annual Report for 1917 both in M1011, roll 119.

social event for the Yuki before contact, but Frank Essene suggested the Wailacki or Lassik introduced the game to the Yuki after contact.⁶⁵

Regardless of who introduced it, nearly all Indians played grass game. It was a sleight of hand game, where the opponent tried to guess the order of sticks or bones hidden underneath grass or blankets. Leland Fulwider explained, "they don't play with grass, and usually put a blanket or something on them...In my day, they used grass...roll them bones up in there and slide them around, hide them, back there and when they're ready, slick bone and string bones."⁶⁶ Randolph Lincoln also recalled how Indians played grass game, "They'd roll 'em up in the grass. The bones you know. Now days, they don't do that....They just put them in their hand, but long ago they used grass...roll 'em up in grass. Used the slick bone or the string bone and you guessed.... [The bones were made of] mostly coyote bones."⁶⁷ Indians also played card games. Randolph Lincoln remembered, "they played poker mostly [in the brush houses]...card game... they had this five card game, kind of a fast game, one of those quick

⁶⁵ Foster, "Summary of Yuki Culture," 194-97; Essene, "Cultural Elements Distributions," 26, 62. See also Jeannine Gendar, *Grass Games & Moon Races: California Indian Games and Toys* (Berkeley: Heyday Books, 1995), 51-69.

⁶⁶ Fulwider interview.

⁶⁷ R. Lincoln interview.

games. Yeah, they'd stay up all night play cards."⁶⁸ It is interesting the card game Lincoln described resembled grass game with its emphasis on speed and dexterity.

Indians played grass game anywhere they could. Cyetta Williams recalled the Yukis "used to have Indian dances and meet and sing and dance and play grass games."⁶⁹ Claude Hoaglen remembered as a child crawling up to the roundhouses at night and watching people play grass game. After the game concluded, Hoaglen looked around the playing area for loose change.⁷⁰ After the issue of fee patents in the early 1920s, Indians made a new place to play grass game. The reservation agent complained after the government issued fee patents to the Indians, they all retreated to their allotments and played grass game. In 1922, the agent lamented, "[The Indians] go in crowds to a gambling game or a horse race, but they avoid the church."⁷¹ As in the nineteenth century, Indians knew how to participate in activities of which the agents disapproved.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Williams interview.

⁷⁰ Claude Hoaglen interview by author, 6/18/02. For other descriptions of grass game see Acie Hoaglen, *Voices and Dreams*, 89; Duncan and Fulwider interview; Myrtle Shively, *Voices and Dreams*, 266; Armstead Want, *Singing Feather*, 66; Annual Report for 1913, Annual Report for 1916, and Annual Report for 1917 all in M1011, roll 119.

⁷¹ Annual Report for 1922. See also Annual Report for 1920 and Annual Report for 1921, all in M1011, roll 119.

Indians embedded their own meanings in grass game and other forms of gambling. "They sure like to gamble them people around here," Leland Fulwider observed. "You can't play, go broke, they...gamble their saddle away or their horse."⁷² Anthropologist George Foster also witnessed grass games and saw the pot reach as high as \$400.⁷³ Possibly, Indians gambled for fun and to redistribute wealth among the group. As with throwing money to dancers during roundhouse dances, high pots, saddles, and horses may have spread livestock and cash among Indians who lacked access to them.

Alcohol often lubricated grass games. Claude Hoaglen chuckled, "I played [grass game] when I got older and after got to drinking wine."⁷⁴ When Doran Lincoln worked at the Hop Ranch at the south end of the valley he recalled people stayed up late into the night playing the grass game and drinking bootlegged whiskey.⁷⁵

As with gambling, agents attempted to suppress alcohol. At the turn of the century, Henry Liston reported Indians had surrendered alcohol and other activities, "No Indian or white person was under the

⁷² Fulwider interview.

⁷³ Foster, "Summary of Yuki Culture," 195.

⁷⁴ Hoaglen interview.

⁷⁵ D. Lincoln interview.

influence of alcohol at the Fourth of July celebration."⁷⁶ Liston later stated, "I have succeeded in interesting the best citizens of the valley in the matter and a much better state of affairs already exists and we have hopes of continued improvement."⁷⁷ However, a little more than a decade later, a new agent reported, "[the Indians] are given over to the liquor habit."⁷⁸ In 1915, agent E.A. Hutchison provided, he hoped, sufficient proof for the deleterious impact of alcohol. On July 3 of that year, Louis Asbill drank too much alcohol (in anticipation of the July 4th celebration), and "reported at the school the morning of the 4th too intoxicated to attend to his work." Asbill's condition deteriorated during the course of the day. Hutchison observed, "There was a barbecue and celebration on the Fourth at which I was present, and I noticed that he was so much under the influence of liquor that his condition was disgraceful." In response to Asbill's condition and poor conduct, Hutchison suspended him and hired Woodie Whipple, whom Hutchison described as

⁷⁶ Harry Liston to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, August 6, 1900, Agent-CIA Correspondence, box 2, letterbook: 8/14/99-2/13/02.

⁷⁷ Harry Liston to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, April 23, 1900, Agent-CIA Correspondence, box 2, letterbook: 8/14/99-2/13/02. See also ARCIA for 1900, 211.

⁷⁸ Annual Report for 1912, Annual Report for 1914 and Annual Report for 1917 all in M1011, roll 119.

"sober and industrious."⁷⁹ As Asbill's case demonstrates, Indians who imbibed too freely of alcohol risked the loss of their reservation employment.

The timing of Asbill's incident and Liston's earlier observations reveals more about Indian drinking patterns than the agents' critical cast of mind. Indians, and the whites around them, drank heavily on the Fourth of July. As a national holiday, it provided both ethnicities an opportunity to celebrate the nation and free their inhibitions. In other words, it was an appropriate time to drink alcohol. Alcohol was a social drink that brought different ethnicities, classes and generations together.⁸⁰

In addition to holidays, Indians drank alcohol in saloons. During the early twentieth century, agents criticized the presence of the three or four saloons in Covelo.⁸¹ In 1915, the agent decried the saloons, calling them "blind tigers" because they contained gambling and

⁷⁹ E.A. Hutchison to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, July 8, 1915, Administrative Files, box 44, folder: Laborer.

⁸⁰ Robert Rosenzweig suggests the worker class participated in a "boisterous" Fourth of July in order to articulate distinctly working-class culture, one different than that of the industrialists who shared the city of Worcester, Massachusetts. See *Eight Hours for What We Will: Workers and Leisure in an Industrial City, 1870-1920* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983). See also Piess, *Cheap Amusements*, 16-21.

⁸¹ Callie O'Farrell, *Mendocino County Remembered*, II: 95. Judson Liftchild manuscript, Held-Poage Museum and Research House, Ukiah, CA; Armstead Want, *Singing Feather*, 66.

drinking.⁸² The agent's comments echoed those of other anti-saloon forces in the American West. Western reformers attacked saloons because they featured drunkenness, prostitution, and gambling. Indian agents believed alcohol was especially problematic for Indians because it demoralized them.⁸³ However, the patrons of saloons, including Indians, invested their own meanings in saloons. Saloons held social, economic, political and cultural events. These ubiquitous establishments were male social clubs where patrons could socialize, drink, and gamble in a permissive atmosphere. Indian workers found these working class resorts attractive and invested their own meaning in the turn of the century saloon culture.⁸⁴

In 1910, agents believed the county and state governments finally came to their rescue. That year, California passed a local-option law giving towns and cities the authority to prohibit alcohol sale and

⁸² Annual Report for 1915 and Annual Report for 1911 both in M1011, roll 119.

⁸³ For prohibition and anti-saloon sentiment in the American West see White, *"It's Your Misfortune and None of My Own"*, 361; Jay Dew, "Moral Reform in the 'Magic City': Temperance in Guthrie, Oklahoma, 1889-1907," *Chronicles of Oklahoma* 77 (Winter 1999-2000), 406-27.

⁸⁴ For saloons in the American West, see Elliott West, *The Saloon in the Rocky Mountain Mining Frontier* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1979). For saloons as working class havens, see Rosenzweig, *Eight Hours for What We Will*, 35-64; Piess, *Cheap Amusements*, 16-21 and Powers, *Faces Along the Bar*. For a revisionist look at Indians and alcohol see Abbott, "Alcohol and the Anishinaabeg," 31-34.

manufacture. Covelo adopted local prohibition, much to the surprise of local residents. J.D. Liftchild, a non-Indian, ran for office on the prohibition plank. Round Valley wets rounded up men to vote and bribed them with whiskey to come to the polls. Liftchild recalled, "[it was the] eighth wonder of the world when Round Valley voted to dispense with whiskey."⁸⁵

Even after the passage of local-option laws and federal prohibition, punishing bootleggers and liquor sellers was irregular. Leland Fulwider recalled one day Sheriff Tom Begley rode to his stepfather's place to arrest Emmett Spencer. Spencer pulled a shotgun on Begley and the officer smartly rode away. Fulwider fondly remembered, "They got him later but they didn't get him with the evidence [that time]. Ah, that ole corn whiskey."⁸⁶ For the most part, though, local and Indian police officials refused to investigate bootlegging, illegal stills and drinking out of doors.⁸⁷ Agents complained about the illegal distilling of Jackass Brandy, a beverage which people made from fermented

⁸⁵ Liftchild manuscript.

⁸⁶ Fulwider interview.

⁸⁷ Annual Report for 1912 and Annual Report for 1920 both in M1011, roll 119. For local-option laws in the West, see White, "It's Your Misfortune," 361.

prunes.⁸⁸ Leland Fulwider remembered, "Guy standing out there boot legging on the side, little bitty whiskey glass. I think it was two bits a glass or twenty cents, and...a lot of them made their own whiskey."⁸⁹ It remained illegal for Indians to drink alcohol even after prohibition. Armstead Want said, "they didn't start serving Indians liquor until '55." While state laws prevented Indians from legally purchasing alcohol, they easily gained access to it. Whites often bought alcohol for the Native Americans. "I didn't have any problems [getting alcohol] because we had runners," said Want. "Dobie Bauer, he used to buy for us." Additionally, few local peace officers enforced this ordinance. Want admitted he went into the local saloon many times.⁹⁰ Anthropologist Amelia Susman saw this action as something less than philanthropic and accused whites of buying drinks for Round Valley Indians to take advantage of them.⁹¹

Given the infrequent prosecution of whiskey sellers, agents tried to persuade the Indian police to suppress the liquor traffic. In 1913, Major James McLaughlin

⁸⁸ Annual Report for 1921 and Annual Report for 1922 both in M1011, roll 119.

⁸⁹ Fulwider interview.

⁹⁰ Armstead Want, *Singing Feather*, 70.

⁹¹ Susman, "Round Valley Indians," 43.

exhorted Indians to be vigilant in the prosecution of liquor sellers, "When you know a white man is introducing liquor on the reservation, you should report to [the agent] immediately, and aid him in getting the necessary witnesses to have the case prosecuted."⁹² However, Indians and Indian police officers proved reluctant to capture liquor sellers.⁹³ As with the police's intermittent capture of Indian school truants, Indian police officers may have seen little good in punishing alcohol sellers. Some Indians, for instance, found more in common with whites who drank alcohol than with Indian agents. Indians, like Jim McGetric, regarded the men who gathered in the saloon as normal and characterized the reformers who chastised Indians for drinking as atypical, "He don't dance, and I never heard him sing," said McGetric, "and he don't play cards, and he thinks a little drink'll send me straight to a bad place. I think he's more different from most of the white people than I am."⁹⁴ Indian police, then, may have responded to

⁹² Round Valley Reservation, August 4, 1913, McLaughlin Papers, roll 30: 490.

⁹³ Harry Liston to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, March 29, 1900, Agent-CIA Correspondence, box 2, letterbook: 8/14/99-2/13/02; Annual Report for 1912 and Annual Report for 1913 both in M1011, roll 119.

⁹⁴ Round Valley Gazette, December 28, 1962. See Unrau, *White Man's Wicked Water*.

community opinion, rather than the demands of agents, when it came to liquor.

Consuming alcohol is one of the stereotypic problems associated with Indian reservations. Most people assume liquor consumption controls Indians. Certainly, some Indians allowed alcohol to overrun their lives, but others moderated their intake, consumed alcohol during recreational events, and integrated themselves in a working-class culture stretching across the country.

The Fourth of July offered much more than an opportunity to perform dances, play grass game and drink alcohol. A rodeo and horse racing was an important part of the holiday. Cowboys - Indian and non-Indian - put their skills on the line in events such as bronc riding and steer wrestling.⁹⁵ In addition, Indians raced horses. Victoria Frazier, who along with her husband worked on the Rohrbaugh ranch, raced horses for her employer and was considered one of the best riders in the area.⁹⁶ In addition, Indians entered their own horses. In 1905, Charles Dorman entered his horse in the annual affair.⁹⁷

⁹⁵ Covelo Review, June 28, 1905; Dorothy Reid, *Voices and Dreams*, 247; William Robertson, *Mendocino County Remembered*, 2: 147; Fulwider interview; D. Lincoln interview. For later rodeo events see Armstead Want, *Singing Feather*, 64-65.

⁹⁶ Victoria Frazier, *Mendocino County Remembered*, 1: 160; D. Lincoln interview.

⁹⁷ Covelo Review, June 28, 1905.

In the northern Great Plains and the Southwest, rodeo and horse racing was one area where Indians adapted their culture to new surroundings.⁹⁸ In northern California, rodeo and horse racing contributed to the working-class culture Indians created. They publicly demonstrated their cowboy skills and connected the rodeo to other recreational and ceremonial activities on the Fourth of July.

Finally, Indians played a variety of Indian and non-Indian sports. Indians participated in foot races on weekends and holidays.⁹⁹ Others played a form of shinny, which the Yuki played before contact. Leland Fulwider explained, "out there above Ralph Moore's, cross the valley, that was where you start in....They put the ball and hit it....The ball would go and they'd try to hit it back, base way down there, base way up here....And they just run...hit that ball!" Contests of shinny also provided for interesting statements on the social construction of gender. Fulwider recalled, "Mom's Aunt,

⁹⁸ See Peter Iverson, *When Indians Became Cowboys: Native Peoples and Cattle Ranching in the American West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1994); Peter Iverson and Linda MacCannell, *Riders of the West: Portraits from Indian Rodeo* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1999); Allison Fuss, "Riding Buffalos and Broncos: Rodeo as a Twentieth Century Northern Plains Indian Family, Tribal, and Inter-Tribal Tradition," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Notre Dame, 1998.

⁹⁹ William Robertson, *Mendocino County Remembered*, 2: 147; Williams interview; Gendar, *Grass Games & Moon Races*, 101-04.

Sally Duncan was playing. Yuki woman, big, tall....They couldn't beat her, say it was no fair, you got man on your team. Mom's Aunt Sally come up [and said], 'you fellas growl about man on team.' Pull up her dress and [yelled] 'look, look! I'm no man.'"¹⁰⁰

While picking hops, Indians also boxed and wrestled other Indians. Leland Fulwider remembered, "Mom told me about old man Ackerman and Wilburn, the greatest wrestlers them days. No science, just strength....They beat Ukiah, everybody around here. Old man Ackerman...beat Wilburn too....Mom said old man Ackerman, he took all of Ukiah, him and that Wilburn. I forgot what Wilburn that was, and they'd wrestle together. Ackerman pinned him."¹⁰¹ Boxing too provided sporting heroes to Indian athletes. Agnes Duncan recalled, "You remember a fella, Yuki fella by the name of Paul Davis?....Big, tall, strapping young fella...everybody goes to Cunningham['s ranch] and camps to Ukiah to pick hops. Well, these Covelo people got these two guys to match up with boxing, fighting fist fight, Paul Davis against...Archie

¹⁰⁰ Duncan and Fulwider interview. See also Williams interview and Loris Innis, *Martha Louisa Bryant: Pioneer Teacher*, Martha Bryant File, Held-Poage Research House and Museum, Ukiah, CA.

¹⁰¹ Duncan and Fulwider interview.

Mcwhinny...and they fought and the Yuki man got the best of it...."¹⁰²

Lastly, Indians played baseball against white teams in Mendocino County. On the Fourth of July, a baseball team from Laytonville played the Covelo team. On the following day, the Indian baseball team played the winner. In 1905, the Covelo newspaper reported, "The Indian team has never been beaten since they organized about four years ago, not even in the practice games."¹⁰³ Indians who played baseball against white teams from either Laytonville or Covelo demonstrated racial pride by beating the all-white teams, and implicitly questioned the segregation and racial ideologies prevalent in Mendocino County. However, off the diamond, Indians and whites ceased to interact and whites maintained their rigid racial hierarchy.¹⁰⁴

The lives of Indian workers were not solely occupied by picking hops or working on ranches. Indians imbedded weekends, ration days, American holidays, and the worksite itself with their recreational and ceremonial activities. They held Bole-Maru dances in roundhouses on

¹⁰² Duncan and Fulwider interview.

¹⁰³ Covelo Review, June 14, 1905. See also John S. Hogshead Manuscript, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

¹⁰⁴ For Indians playing professional baseball see, Jeffrey Powers-Beck, "'Chief': The American Indian Integration of Baseball, 1897-1945," *American Indian Quarterly* 25 (Fall 2001): 508-38.

holidays or days off, and made efforts to evade reservation agents. They played grass game and drank alcohol after a day's work concluded. On the Fourth of July, they raced horses, risked their health riding broncs, and watched Covelo and Laytonville playing baseball in anticipation of their match with the winner the following day. As with other working classes in the United States, religious institutions, saloons, and the sporting arena were important meeting places in which to articulate a working-class subculture. However, the religious ceremonies, gambling games, and sporting events allowed Indians to provide distinctive Indian versions of this culture.

Chapter 7:
"Well, Mr. Kroeber":
Indians, Anthropologists, and a Living Wage, 1913-1937

Vine Deloria, Jr. wrote, "Some people have bad horoscopes, others take bad stock tips.... But Indians have been cursed above all other people in history. Indians have anthropologists."¹ Decrying anthropologists' insensitivity and misperceptions of Indian life, Deloria forced scholars to reconsider how they approach American Indian history and culture. These issues remain important for Native scholars and people.² The controversy concerning Ramon Gutierrez' book demonstrated many scholars have much to learn about the history and anthropology of American Indian peoples. Many Pueblos accused Gutierrez of misrepresenting Pueblo beliefs about sexuality and marriage.³

Yet, this perspective tends to focus on how anthropologists approach Indians, rather than how Indians

¹ Vine Deloria, Jr., *Custer Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1988, 1969), 78.

² See, for example, Mihesuah, ed., *Natives and Academics*; Tom Biolsi and Larry Zimmerman, eds., *Indians and Anthropologists: Vine Deloria, Jr. and the Critique of Anthropology* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1997).

³ Ramon Gutierrez, *When Jesus Came the Corn Mothers Went Away: Marriage, Sexuality, and Power in New Mexico, 1500-1846* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1991). One should also consult Native American Studies Center, University of New Mexico, comp., "Commentaries on *When Jesus Came, the Corn Mothers Went Away: Marriage, Sexuality, and Power in New Mexico, 1500-1846*, by Ramon Gutierrez," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*, 17:3 (1993), 154-58 and Susan Miller, "Licensed Trafficking and Ethnogenetic Engineering," in *Natives and Academics*, esp. 104-07.

encountered anthropologists. This chapter examines the correspondence between the anthropologist Alfred Kroeber and a Yuki on the Round Valley Reservation, Ralph Moore. It also includes Kroeber's students' remarks concerning their fieldwork in Round Valley during the 1930s.

Anthropologists sought cultural knowledge from Round Valley Indians and were willing to pay for it. Indians viewed their relationship with anthropologists as an employer and an employee.

The correspondence of Ralph Moore and Alfred Kroeber begins in the early 1910s. In 1913, Moore wrote to Kroeber, inquiring about making another trip to the University of California, Berkeley campus. "Do you think you'd have me to come down to San Francisco," Moore asked. "You don't know how I like to be there with you again."⁴ Apparently, Moore had visited Kroeber at Berkeley between November 1911 and April 1912 because Moore referenced two of Kroeber's informants at the library, "Let me know about

⁴ Ralph Moore to Alfred Kroeber, January 12, 1913, CU-23, Box 104, folder: Moore, Ralph.

Ishi, the wild man.... Can you tell me where Juan Delores could be? I would like to write to him."⁵

Anthropologists solicited the aid of other Round Valley Indians. In 1919, David Brown stated he would like to provide information to the anthropologists, "I don't mind going down there if I had any money to start, but I haven't got any and if you can make any arrangements so I can say yes I will and you want me to come send me more rubber for my crutches for I can't get round without them on cement sidewalk."⁶ In this exchange, Brown was an astute bargainer. Since the Anthropology Department wanted something from him, Brown told them that they had to pay his way and provide rubber for his crutches. Unfortunately, Brown responded too late, as the department found another person to provide the information.⁷

In summer of 1923, Kroeber and Moore renewed their acquaintanceship. Kroeber traveled to Oregon, made a stop

⁵ Ibid. Juan Delores was a Papago who showed up on Kroeber's doorstep in 1908. In November 1911, he stayed at Berkeley and met Ishi, who was beginning his residence at the library. Delores remained on campus until April 1912. See Theodora Kroeber, *Ishi in Two Worlds: A Biography of the Last Wild Indian in North America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984, 1969), 156-61. I suggest that Moore was on campus sometime during those six months and met both men.

⁶ David Brown to ?, November 7, 1919, CU-23, Box 37, folder: Brown, David.

⁷ ? to David Brown, November 19, 1919, CU-23, Box 37, folder: Brown, David.

at the Round Valley reservation and visited with Moore. He ended his letter by telling Moore that he wanted him to come to campus in October.⁸ The following month, Kroeber stated that he would pay for Moore's travel expenses, allow him to stay on campus, and pay him \$2.50 per day. He hoped that Moore would stay for at least seven days, thus Moore could earn \$17.50 for the week. After their work was complete, Moore would have the opportunity to visit San Francisco.⁹ The correspondence between Kroeber and Moore resembled the exchange between an employer and employee. To attract Moore, Kroeber offered a decent wage, subsidized transportation, and the alluring nightlife of San Francisco. Kroeber reiterated these options four years later when he asked Moore to return to the Bay Area, "I wonder whether you would like to come down some time before long and help me once more with the Yuki language.... It would not be a very long job, perhaps we could get through in a week.... In between times when I have other things to do you would be free, and it would be more or less a vacation for you, something like last time.

⁸ Alfred Kroeber to Ralph Moore, August 23, 1923, CU-23, Box 104, folder: Moore, Ralph.

⁹ Alfred Kroeber to Ralph Moore, September 28, 1923, CU-23, Box 104, folder: Moore, Ralph.

I could pay you the same wages and your expenses as before."¹⁰

Moore too saw his relationship with Kroeber in terms of employment. He replied to Kroeber's 1927 request, "How about the fair [sic][?] [Y]ou send me up some money or will I have to do that[?] [M]oney is very hard to get up here right about that time."¹¹ The economic conditions in Round Valley certainly made Kroeber's offer enticing. Cash was scarce for Indians before the summer work season began. Moore also recognized the need for Kroeber to pay his expenses to and from Berkeley. Kroeber sent Moore \$4.00: half for the bus fare and half for meals in Willits and on the ferry between Sausalito and San Francisco.¹²

Moore's work with Kroeber also had to accommodate Moore's jobs in Round Valley. A few months after Moore returned to Round Valley from Berkeley in 1927, Kroeber asked Moore to come back to Berkeley in December. Moore doubted he could do this, "[About] [t]he work once more again, I am not doing much now, perhaps I will be working in the field Farming grain land about that time." Moore worried about having free time in December in which to

¹⁰ Alfred Kroeber to Ralph Moore, April 4, 1927, CU-23, Box 104, folder: Moore, Ralph.

¹¹ Ralph Moore to Alfred Kroeber, April 14, 1927, CU-23, Box 104, folder: Moore, Ralph.

¹² Alfred Kroeber to Ralph Moore, May 4, 1927, CU-23, Box 104, folder: Moore, Ralph.

work. Moore also did not care to travel in the winter, but he reluctantly agreed.¹³

A few weeks before Moore was supposed to visit campus, Kroeber abruptly cancelled Moore's visit. Someone asked Kroeber to write articles on Indians in North America and needed them quickly.¹⁴ Moore was irate about the turn of events, "I had a good job working October when I first herd [sic] from you[.] I work month of Nov. and got through to be ready in Dec. for a trip to Berkeley once more. Now I haven't any work to do. I won't have any work in January, but in Feb. I will start to work again...when I start work I get good wages with my Team of horses I get \$7.50 a day." By the end of the letter, Moore's temper cooled but he still appeared despondent about the turn of events, "Well Mr. Kroeber it is bad that we are on different lines of work. That is all."¹⁵ For Moore, the work with Kroeber had to fit in his seasonal labor cycles. He created time to work with Kroeber because that work replaced the wages he earned with his horses and offered the fringe benefits of spending time in

¹³ Alfred Kroeber to Ralph Moore, October 3, 1927; quote from Ralph Moore to Alfred Kroeber, n.d., 1927 both in CU-23, Box 104, folder: Moore, Ralph.

¹⁴ Alfred Kroeber to Ralph Moore, December 5, 1927, CU-23, Box 104, folder: Moore, Ralph.

¹⁵ Ralph Moore to Alfred Kroeber, December 9, 1927, CU-23, Box 104, folder: Moore, Ralph.

the Bay Area. However, once Kroeber cancelled their meeting, Moore was in an awkward position. He was without work for at least two months and during the winter when expenses were high and money scarce.

The intermittent relationship between Kroeber and Moore renewed in 1931. That year, Hans Uldall, a linguistic anthropologist, agreed to help Kroeber decipher the Yuki language. In October, Moore returned to Berkeley, but became ill during his stay. Kroeber sent Moore to Dr. W.E. Carter, and he diagnosed Moore with tuberculosis and diabetes. After visiting the doctor, Moore returned to Round Valley, but Kroeber continued to seek expert care for Moore. He arranged with the Indian Office to send Moore to a sanatorium in Phoenix, Arizona.¹⁶ Kroeber demonstrated constant and genuine concern for Moore. They had a thirty-year acquaintanceship and the death of Ishi seventeen years before Moore's illness probably still haunted Kroeber. In the case of Moore,

¹⁶ Alfred Kroeber to Ralph Moore, September 7, 1931; Alfred Kroeber to Dr. W.E. Carter, November 17, 1931; Dr. W.E. Carter to Alfred Kroeber, November 23, 1931; Alfred Kroeber to Dr. W.E. Carter, November 24, 1931; Ralph Moore to Alfred Kroeber, November 30, 1931; Alfred Kroeber to Ralph Moore, December 2, 1931; Alfred Kroeber to Ralph Moore, December 4, 1931 all in CU-23, Box 104, folder: Moore, Ralph.

however, Kroeber was nearby and secured medical help for his Indian friend and informant.¹⁷

Moore acceded to Kroeber's pleas and left his partially built house and ranch work in Covelo, arriving in Phoenix on December 10, 1931. Moore reluctantly checked into the Phoenix sanatorium, and quickly wrote a letter to Kroeber. He asked for writing tablets, stamps, and a little cash to tide him over since, "I left nearly all the money I made when I was with you [at home]."¹⁸

Kroeber sent Moore paper and stamps, but made no mention of Moore's appeal for money. Moore thanked Kroeber for honoring part of his request and added, "I have hope Mr. Kroeber that I will work for you once more next year."¹⁹ Moore's illness harmed neither his relationship with Kroeber nor his willingness to work as an anthropological informant. Possibly, Moore recognized that being an anthropological informant would generate more income for him now that he was ill.

By February 1932, Moore's condition had improved, and he informed Kroeber, who was spending the semester at

¹⁷ When Ishi died in 1914, Kroeber was returning from a summer in Europe, but he did not make it back to Berkeley before he died. Kroeber, *Ishi in Two Worlds*, 231-38.

¹⁸ Ralph Moore to Alfred Kroeber, December 14, 1931, CU-23, Box 104, folder: Moore, Ralph. See also Ralph Moore to Alfred Kroeber, December 6, 1931, CU-23, Box 104, folder: Moore, Ralph.

¹⁹ Ralph Moore to Alfred Kroeber, December 23, 1931, CU-23, Box 104, folder: Moore, Ralph. See also Alfred Kroeber to Ralph Moore, December 17, 1931, CU-23, Box 104, folder: Moore, Ralph.

Columbia University, "I don't cough like I did when I was to Berkeley working for you. I sleep good at night. I don't have night sweat." Moore's special diet helped him gain five pounds during his two-month stay. The lack of cash still bothered Moore, however. He again requested money from Kroeber, "Well Mr. Kroeber, I am asking you for help that is I like to have some money. I know you don't owe me anything but, I thought I would ask you about \$20.00 being I know I will work for you again when I get back home. I will try and send it to you when I work. My wife has no money just now [and] I need some things."²⁰

This time, Kroeber acknowledged Moore's request, but could not fulfill it, "As to the money, I am awfully short right now because I had to borrow to make the trip here. I may be able to do something a little later, I can't promise but I hope to."²¹ The employer-employee relationship again seeped into the correspondence between Moore and Kroeber. Moore was not asking for a handout, but an advance in pay in order to alleviate his family's poverty. He expected to work for Kroeber soon and pay off his debt.

In April, Moore returned to the reservation and continued his correspondence with Kroeber. He informed

²⁰ Ralph Moore to Alfred Kroeber, February 1, 1932, CU-23, Box 104, folder: Moore, Ralph.

²¹ Alfred Kroeber to Ralph Moore, February 19, 1932, CU-23, Box 104, folder: Moore, Ralph.

the anthropologist that he gained 13 pounds at the sanatorium, but was anxious to work and inquired about when Kroeber was returning from New York.²² Kroeber informed Moore that he was too busy, but might want Moore in September. Moore found Kroeber's response troubling. The doctor told Moore that he could not work in the hay or other agricultural jobs. "I am willing to work now," Moore insisted, "but your letter that you want me to come down in Sept. but I don't know. I may be busy in that month, but now I am free and also in July. I would like to work now if I could because I need the money."²³ Five months in the sanatorium left Moore's family without its principal wage earner. Whether working for Kroeber or hiring out his team, Moore earned money for his family. Once that income was gone, his family was in trouble. Further, Moore's illness prevented him from resuming a normal worklife. He could not haul hay or perform strenuous labor for fear of exacerbating his condition. Under these circumstances, working for Kroeber would help Moore get back on his financial feet. Kroeber, though, did not need Moore when Moore needed the work.

²² Ralph Moore to Alfred Kroeber, April 18, 1932, CU-23, Box 104, folder: Moore, Ralph.

²³ Ralph Moore to Alfred Kroeber, June 10, 1932, CU-23, Box 104, folder: Moore, Ralph. See also, Alfred Kroeber to Ralph Moore, June 3, 1932, CU-23, Box 104, folder: Moore, Ralph.

Kroeber responded to Moore's letter, and informed him he and Uldall would be ready to record the Yuki language in the middle of August.²⁴ Moore still worried about his predicament. "I am having a hard time," Moore mentioned, "I want to know if you are going to pay me the same as you do every thing the same. I would like to be at the Anthropology Building. What I mean that is to sleep there have my room there. The place where I use to stay, that was the nice place."²⁵ Conditions and considerations of employment were foremost in Moore's mind. Given his and the nation's economic problems, negotiating of wages and sleeping accommodations alleviated problems stemming from his unemployment. Moore spent parts of August and September at the university working with the two anthropologists, and then returned to the reservation.²⁶

The letters between Moore and Kroeber began again in 1938. Moore's tuberculosis had returned and he was placed in a Weimar, California sanatorium. While there Moore requested of Kroeber, "I sure would like to have that book

²⁴ Alfred Kroeber to Ralph Moore, July 27, 1932, CU-23, Box 104, folder: Moore, Ralph; Alfred Kroeber to Hans Uldall, July 27, 1932, CU-23, Box 148, folder: Uldall, Hans.

²⁵ Ralph Moore to Alfred Kroeber, August 1, 1932, CU-23, Box 104, folder: Moore, Ralph.

²⁶ Ralph Moore to Alfred Kroeber, October 1, 1932; Alfred Kroeber to Ralph Moore, October 5, 1932; Ralph Moore to Alfred Kroeber, October 28, 1932; Ralph Moore to Alfred Kroeber, January 3, 1933; Alfred Kroeber to Ralph Moore, February 20, 1933; Ralph Moore to Alfred Kroeber, March 30, 1933 all in CU-23, Box 104, folder: Moore, Ralph.

of my language that we were working on. I would like to have some kind of a book that I could read."²⁷ Moore was keenly aware of the implications of the work he had done with Kroeber and other anthropologists at the University of California. He had left a written record of the Yuki language for others to study, and wanted some acknowledgment of that work.

During the Great Depression, Indians and anthropologists benefited from the work relationships that Kroeber and Moore created. Kroeber sent many of his students - including Frank Essene and George Foster - to conduct fieldwork in Round Valley.²⁸ Each of his students' experiences provided new insights on the relationship between Indians, anthropologists, and wage labor.

In 1935, Essene sponsored an anthropological project through the State Emergency Relief Administration (SERA). A temporary New Deal work relief program, SERA provided

²⁷ Ralph Moore to Alfred Kroeber, February 17, 1939. See also Alfred Kroeber to Ralph Moore, November 22, 1938; Ralph Moore to Alfred Kroeber, n.d., 1938; Alfred Kroeber to Ralph Moore, February 14, 1939 all in CU-23, Box 104, folder: Moore, Ralph.

²⁸ George M. Foster, "An Anthropologist's Life in the Twentieth Century: Theory and Practice at UC Berkeley, the Smithsonian, in Mexico, and with the World Health Organization," an oral history conducted in 1998 and 199 by Suzanne B. Reiss, Regional Oral History Office, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 2000. Essene's and Foster's research findings are published in Essene, "Cultural Elements Distributions," and Foster, "Summary of Yuki Culture."

loaned money to county and city relief projects.²⁹ Essene hired elderly Indians as anthropological informants and younger Indians as reporters, and paid them \$.37½ cents per hour.³⁰

Essene gravitated to Round Valley for logistical reasons. Whereas in the Ukiah Valley, "[t]he Indians are quite scattered with many of them working out in the hop fields," the centralization of SERA at Round Valley made his job easier, "Covelo is the headquarters of the SERA work in that district. The Indians working on the SERA have moved to Covelo in a body which will help somewhat in getting eligible Indians in one locality."³¹ The large Indian population and the mechanics of New Deal bureaucracy favored Round Valley as the primary site for Essene's work.

Essene faced numerous problems during his summer-long project. Many Indians that Essene wanted to hire were ineligible for SERA when he arrived, "Ralph Moore is

²⁹ Elsey Hurt, *California State Government: An Outline of Its Administrative Organization*, 2 vols. (Sacramento: California State Government, 1939), vol. II (The Independent Agencies, 1850-1939): 57-58.

³⁰ Frank Essene to Alfred Kroeber, June 12, 1935; Frank Essene to Alfred Kroeber, June 27, 1935; Frank Essene to Alfred Kroeber, July 5, 1935; Frank Essene to Alfred Kroeber, July 12, 1935; Frank Essene to Alfred Kroeber, July 18, 1935; Frank Essene to Alfred Kroeber, July 26, 1935; Frank Essene to Alfred Kroeber, August 10, 1935, all in June 12, 1935, CU-23, Box 54, folder: Essene, Frank.

³¹ Frank Essene to Alfred Kroeber, June 12, 1935, CU-23, Box 54, folder: Essene, Frank.

working at present, but he'll probably be eligible for SERA work soon."³² The administration of Mendocino County's relief rolls also prevented the efficacy of his project. Indian families could not have more than one member of the household on the SERA rolls. When elderly Indians, whom Essene wanted to hire, lived in extended households, the young men refused to split their time with the elderly or surrender jobs on the road crew.³³ During the Great Depression, families marginalized the labor of elderly Indians in favor of younger workers, who could conceivably earn more money and work longer. Other Indians believed SERA jobs kept children out of trouble. Essene reported, "Arthur Anderson won't come back as he wishes to keep his boy working on the SERA road gang. It seems that the boy gets drunk when he lays around doing nothing."³⁴ Anderson refused to participate with Essene because he believed that a job would help reform his son.

SERA itself fell victim to administrative changes. On July 5, 1935, county relief organizations assumed control of SERA and "a large number of projects will be

³² Frank Essene to Alfred Kroeber, July 5, 1935. See also Frank Essene to Alfred Kroeber, June 27, 1935, both in CU-23, Box 54, folder: Essene, Frank.

³³ Frank Essene to Alfred Kroeber, June 19, 1935, June 12, 1935, CU-23, Box 54, folder: Essene, Frank.

³⁴ Frank Essene to Alfred Kroeber, July 5, 1935. See also June 12, 1935, CU-23, Box 54, folder: Essene, Frank.

dropped due to increased numbers of SERA workers."³⁵ These problems coalesced in August. Essene explained, "A number of SERA projects will be stopped shortly because of hop picking, and also pears, grapes and apples will be coming in soon." In addition to the demands of agricultural labor, the state disbanded SERA and replaced it with a different relief organization after August 15.³⁶

In 1937, George Foster and Amelia Susman conducted fieldwork on separate projects in Round Valley. Foster hired Ralph Moore for \$.25 per hour, and the two worked for six hours a day. After awhile, Moore told Foster that he was not asking him anything new, and all of the material was in Kroeber's *Handbook of California Indians*.³⁷ Foster then offered Moore \$10 for the book, to which Moore promptly replied, "Sold!"³⁸ After speaking with Kroeber in Berkeley, Foster returned to Round Valley but Moore was unavailable for work. He was cutting hay and seemed reluctant to help with Foster's project.³⁹ Foster then

³⁵ Frank Essene to Alfred Kroeber, July 5, 1935. See also Frank Essene to Alfred Kroeber, June 27, 1935; Frank Essene to Alfred Kroeber, July 12, 1935; Frank Essene to Alfred Kroeber, July 18, 1935 all in CU-23, Box 54, folder: Essene, Frank.

³⁶ Frank Essene to Alfred Kroeber, August 10, 1935, CU-23, Box 54, folder: Essene, Frank.

³⁷ Alfred Kroeber, *Handbook of the Indians of California Indians* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1925).

³⁸ Foster interview.

³⁹ George Foster to Mrs. Chilcote, May 25, 1937, George Foster to Alfred Kroeber, June 1, 1937, George Foster to Mrs. Chilcote, June 9, 1937 all in CU-23, box 57, folder: Foster, George.

hired Little Toby, Charles Dorman, and Eben Tillotson for \$2 for six hours of work. Some of the informants grumbled that they could make more money hauling hay than being informants. Still, Foster added, "to all outward appearances, the Indians I have had contact with are very much interested in helping me get as complete notes as possible."⁴⁰

Susman arrived in July and, during her time, attempted to help one of her informants with a job.⁴¹ She wrote to Alfred Kroeber that Fred Major "suggested to me that recordings be made of his speech and songs, partly because he could like to earn something, but mostly because of his interest in what little I have done along those lines with him." She added "winter is the best time to get him because he is busy farming and digging wells in the warm weather."⁴² The department secretary informed Susman Kroeber was unable to hire Major because Kroeber had to have gall bladder surgery, Professor Edward Gifford was unwilling to hire Major and Dr. Lowie was at Yale.⁴³

⁴⁰ George Foster to Alfred Kroeber, June 1, 1937, CU-23, box 57, folder: Foster, George.

⁴¹ For Susman's arrival see, George Foster to Mrs. Chilcote, June 9, 1937, CU-23, box 57, folder: Foster, George.

⁴² Amelia Susman to Alfred Kroeber, October 5, 1937, CU-23, Box 144, folder: Susman, Amelia.

⁴³ For Kroeber's surgery see Secretary to Amelia Susman, October 11, 1937, CU-23, Box 144, folder: Susman, Amelia.

While some Indians helped the young anthropologists, others made their lives difficult. Rachel Logan recalled an anthropologist approached her about recording songs, but her father, Frank interceded. Frank stated, "You better get on your way. I'm no Indian.... The white man come through here and broke us of our language, our dances and our whatnot.... This is what they done to us. We don't have any and I don't sing Indian songs.... I'm a white man, just like you." The startled anthropologist packed up his recording instruments and left.⁴⁴ Foster and Susman also encountered resistance. Foster reported, "I have found [Arthur Anderson] to be more of a liability than anything else. He is head of the reservation council, and had been spreading the word that anthropologists are here to make lots of money from publications, and that the Indians are fools to work for them."⁴⁵

The statements of Logan and Anderson reflect many Indians' problems with anthropologists. Anthropologists were often callous toward Indians, made little effort to benefit Indians with their work, and entered Indian country and took away (or purchased at a nominal price)

⁴⁴ Rachel Logan interview by Les Lincoln, 4/90, RVOHP.

⁴⁵ George Foster to Alfred Kroeber, July 14, 1937, CU-23, box: 57, folder: Foster, George.

cultural knowledge.⁴⁶ However, the relationship between Indians like Moore and Major and anthropologists like Kroeber, Essene, and Foster demonstrates the ways Indians molded these interactions around labor. Indians envisioned their relationship as an employer-employee relationship. They frequently discussed wages, work conditions, and after work activities. These wages helped some Indian families survive the Great Depression. Work with anthropologists also had to fit within the Indians' agricultural worklife. Many Indians simply lacked the time to spend hours with anthropologists when there were hops to be picked. Finally, Indians attempted to dictate how anthropologists recorded their history and culture. As Eben Tillotson once told Foster, "I want you to make sure you get this right because my children and grandchildren are going to know about this only if they read what you write."⁴⁷ Thus, Tillotson's labor ensured that future generations of Round Valley Indians understood their cultural heritage.

⁴⁶ Many scholars have recognized the problematic relationships between Indians and anthropologists. See Angela Cavender Wilson, "American Indian History or Non-Indian Perceptions of American Indian History?," 23-26; Duane Champagne, "American Indian Studies is for Everyone," 183-84 both in Mihesuah, ed., *Natives and Academics*.

⁴⁷ Foster interview.

**Chapter 8:
Poverty, Labor and Indians
During the Great Depression**

As elsewhere in the United States, the Great Depression precipitated profound changes in the economic and social lives of Round Valley Indians.¹ New religious activities threatened distinctly Indian ceremonies and activities, such as the Earth Lodge Cult and grass game.

Awakened by a nation of unemployed people, White observers commented on the impoverished condition of Round Valley Indians. However, Round Valley Indians adapted to the difficult economic times. They maintained their multisource incomes and expanded their job opportunities to offset declining economic opportunities.

In addition, the Indian Reorganization Act seemingly provided Indians an opportunity to control their economic lives. Much like their interpretation of federal allotment, Round Valley Indians displayed some optimism about the new direction of federal policy. Yet, Mendocino County whites saw IRA as an obstacle to their ability to procure Indian workers. As we have seen throughout this history of Round Valley, Indians and whites contested the meaning of Indian labor during the Great Depression.

Indians witnessed one fundamental change in their

ceremonial and social lives during the Great Depression.

Leland Fulwider remembered, "when the church first came here, Pentecostal Church, that's when everything started dying out."² Norma Knight recalled the advent of new religious sects more belligerently, "All of these Christian churches just made our people crazier than ever. Sixty years ago the Holy Rollers came in and they left with our culture."³ In addition to new religious activities, Indians recalled tribal languages receded during the 1930s. Filbert Anderson's aunt, who spoke a few Concow words, and Frank Logan, who spoke "high-class" Yuki, were all that remained of a once linguistically diverse area. By the mid-1930s, a generation gap existed. Middle-aged Native Americans understood traditional languages but could not speak them. The younger generation, on the other hand, could neither speak nor understand the languages. The reservation school influenced this breach in generations. The generation of children that grew up in the 1920s never received an education in tribal customs. Even though Filbert Anderson's aunt spoke some Concow, he never

¹ For studies of American Indians during the Great Depression see, Graham D. Taylor, *The New Deal and American Indian Tribalism: The Administration of the Indian Reorganization Act* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1977); Harry A. Kersey, Jr, "Florida Seminoles in the Depression and New Deal, 1932-1942: An Indian Perspective," *Florida Historical Quarterly*, 65 (1986): 175-95.

² Leland Fulwider interview by Acklan Willits, 4/23/90, RVOHP.

³ George Snyder, "The Indian Wars Are Not Over," *Albion Monitor*, September 2, 1995, 3.

learned any of the language.⁴

Indians also remembered ceremonies and songs deteriorated. They partially attributed this to the personal choices of younger Indians. Minnie Card never learned her language or songs, "They sounded so silly that I wouldn't want to repeat them."⁵ June Lozinto refrained from dances, "[they] couldn't get us out there to do anything."⁶ The Round Valley agent recognized that age played a significant role as well. In 1920, he attributed the decline of dances to the fact that leaders died off and people moved the dances to their homes.⁷ Certainly, the decline of leaders was important, but relocating dances to their homes may have been an effort to escape the agent's condescending view. In addition to the loss of cultural knowledge, the death of dance leaders also led to the loss of cultural items. Upon the death of his mother, Leland Fulwider burned his mother's dance paraphernalia.⁸ Lastly, numerous Indians remembered that roundhouses were either torn down or burned when they were young.⁹ Education, personal choice, the death of elders, and the destruction of ceremonial houses certainly played a large role in the decline of a distinctively native

⁴ Many Indians lamented the loss of tribal languages. See for instance, Filbert Anderson interview by Les Lincoln, n.d., RVOHP and Logan interview; Susman, "Round Valley Indians," 34.

⁵ Minnie Card interview by Les Lincoln, 5/90, RVOHP.

⁶ June Lozinto interview by Les Lincoln, 4/90, RVOHP.

⁷ Annual Report, 1920, M1011, roll 119. Eight years earlier, the agent wrote that in 1911 a Concow leader died and only a few Indian dances existed. Annual Report for 1912, M1011, roll 119.

⁸ Duncan and Fulwider interview.

⁹ Logan interview; R. Lincoln interview.

religious tradition.

Indians and white observers debated the impact of the Great Depression in Round Valley. Anthropologist George Foster reported that Indians lived in "wretched cabins [that lacked electricity and running water], containing iron bed stands, a few chairs, a marble-topped mahogany table, and an incredible number of photographs." The elderly had it worse, Foster believed. Since they could not work, they received an old age pension from the government.¹⁰ The statements of some Indians confirm the difficulties posed by the Depression. Eugene Jamison remembered the difficulties of the 1920s and 1930s, "Food was the main issue...clothes came later."¹¹ Many Indian families faced the pinch of economic depression in the 1930s. In 1930, Mary Fallis described her living situation to Sherman superintendent F.M. Conser, "I have to work out to support my children and every penny means something to me...."¹² Many Indians - working and non-working - suffered from privation during the Depression, but their multisource incomes, which included gardens, wage labor, and farming, alleviated some problems.

Some Indians disagreed with those perceptions. Armstead Want recalled that "we lived good." Want's family resided in the mountains above the Big Bend Ranch, and tended a garden of corn and vegetables and cultivated an

¹⁰ Foster, "Summary of Yuki Culture," 155. See also Susman, "Round Valley Indians," 53.

¹¹ Eugene Jamison, *Singing Feather*, 36.

apple orchard. They supplemented their menu with hunting and fishing, "We had a big box...which had salt pork in there just piled up. We lived high on the hog up there and that was during the depression too."¹³ June Britton expressed similar sentiments. While it was difficult, Britton recalled, her family had enough to survive. They had dairy products, canned vegetables from their garden, chickens and a smoke house for meat.¹⁴ The fact that contemporary observations and the oral history of Indian poverty disagree should not be surprising. After all, some may have purposefully ignored or misremembered the dire condition in which they lived. In addition, rural Indian families may have subscribed to what James Scott calls "the subsistence ethic." Producing for family consumption prevailed over producing for the market economy. Indian families that had enough to eat during the Depression did not consider themselves poor.

Not everyone saw it that way. During the Great Depression, white observers gave greater emphasis to the question of poverty and the "deserving poor." At the forefront of this debate was Edith Van Allan Murphey. An author, botanist, and Indian reformer who worked among California Indians, Utes, Nez Perce and the Blackfeet, Murphey spent most of her life attempting to help Mendocino County Indians. In 1927, she assisted Austin

¹² Mary Fallis to F.M. Conser, January 10, 1930, Student Case Files, folder: Fallis, Ruby.

¹³ Armstead Want, *Singing Feather*, 64.

McLane, an elderly and blind Indian on the reservation. McLane attempted to find as much work as he could, but this was inadequate. She solicited the aid of charity organizations in California on behalf of McLane and other Round Valley Indians.¹⁵ Another of her charity cases was William Stillwell. Stillwell had been wounded in combat during World War I, and suffered complications during the 1920s. He had a wife and seven children and no income with which to care for them. He received a county pension of \$20, but this was not enough to feed his family.¹⁶

The early twentieth century witnessed a transformation in the ways in which Americans thought about the poor in general. Historian Daniel Rodgers demonstrates that during the Progressive Era (1890-1940) Americans began to consider the elderly as the "deserving poor." Since the elderly were the first fired from jobs and could not work anymore, it was not their fault they were poor. Reform-minded members of the middle-class recognized that the elderly were not to blame for their poverty, and they warmed to the idea of old-age

¹⁴ June Britton interview by author, March 19, 2002.

¹⁵ Edith Van Allen Murphey to Chauncey Shafter Goodrich, August 21, 1927; Edith Van Allen Murphey to Chauncey Shafter Goodrich, September 6, 1927, Goodrich Papers, box 3, folder: Murphey, Edith Van Allen.

¹⁶ Edith Van Allen Murphey to John Collier, November 9, 1928, C-A 360, carton 4, folder: Indian Bureau, November 1928; Edith Van Allen Murphey to Chauncey Shafter Goodrich, February 17, 1929; Chauncey Shafter Goodrich to Edith Van Allen Murphey, February 19, 1929, both in C-A 360, carton 8, folder: California Indians: Round Valley.

pensions.¹⁷ The Great Depression itself forced middle-class Americans to rethink their ideas about the poor, if only temporarily. During the Depression, middle-class Americans realized that poverty was not a personal flaw, but one's economic status was subject to the whim of economic cycles.¹⁸ Murphey's work in Round Valley represents these changes in American social life. Elderly Indians and war veterans deserved care and support.

For those not considered the deserving poor, worklife changed to meet the demands of Depression-era California.

Many Indians changed their migrant labor patterns. Siblings June Britton and Joe Russ remained in Round Valley for the entire hop season and concentrated their energies on the family farm and labor in the valley. The siblings accompanied their mother to pick hops on Albert Winters' ranch. They recalled waking up at five in the morning, boarding a large truck, and spending the entire day picking hops. The two kept their wages and used the money to purchase school clothes.¹⁹ Others expanded the geographic area in which they worked. Elizabeth Willits remembered, "[I] went over to the Sacramento Valley to

¹⁷ Daniel Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings: Social Politics in a Progressive Age* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1998), 209-66; David Kennedy, *Freedom From Fear: The American People in Depression and War, 1929-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 249-87; Alan Brinkley, *Voices of Protest: Huey Long, Father Coughlin, & the Great Depression* (New York: Vintage Books, 1983), 222-26.

¹⁸ Caroline Bird, *The Invisible Scar* (White Plains: Longman, Inc., 1966).

work for Mr. Willy Freeman. He was a great contractor over there in the fruit there, the prunes, and...tomatoes....He made work for the Indian people." Freeman found jobs for Indians in California's central valley and by the end of the season, the Indians were picking citrus in southern California. Freeman also looked out for the moral well being of workers. Willits stated, "he use to have a church set up for us to go to church...."²⁰ The Great Depression forced families to make hard economic decisions. The Russ family decided to invest their time and energy in their farm and earned a little money by working on the Hop Ranch in Round Valley. Williams responded to the Great Depression by enlarging the geographic area in which she worked.

Interestingly, hop farmers reacted to the Great Depression by improving wage and living conditions on hop ranches. In 1935 and 1936, hop farms raised wages, as long as the workers remained in the fields for the duration of the season. Ukiah Valley hop farmers set the price at \$1.25 per hundred pounds, but if workers left early, the wage was \$1.00 per hundred pounds.²¹ The following year, hop farmers promised "clean and comfortable camps and a program of entertainment" for their workers. However, the hop farmers admitted wages

¹⁹ J. Britton interview; Joe Russ, Sr. interview by author, December 20, 2002. See also Armstead Want, *Singing Feather*, 66-67.

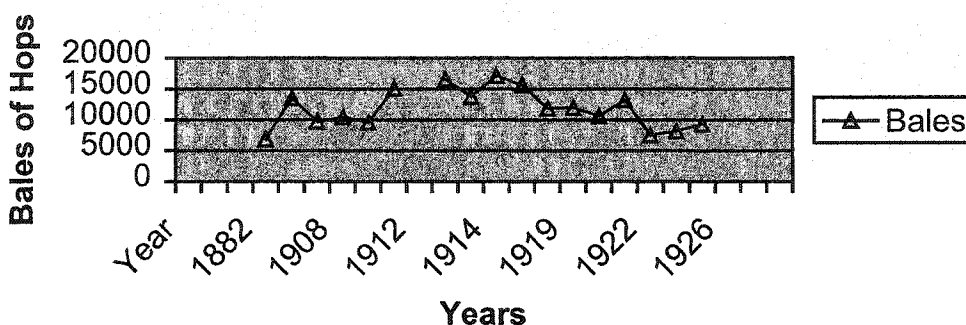
²⁰ Elizabeth Willits interview by Acklan Willits, 4/11/90, RVOHP.

²¹ "Hop Picking Wages Fixed by Growers," C-R 2, Carton 6, folder 138.

were low.²² Increased wages and improved camp life suggests the poor position in which hop farmers found themselves. They needed to harvest the crop as much as the workers needed to work.

During the 1920s, hop production in Mendocino County sharply declined. In 1915, Mendocino County produced its highest total of hops, with 17,109 bales.²³ In 1923, the number of bales fell to 7,476.²⁴ By the beginning of the Great Depression, hop ranchers cultivated only 627 acres.²⁵ (see Table 8.1)

Table 8.1: Hop Production in Mendocino County, 1905-1926



In addition to higher wages and improved camp life, Indians faced changing demographics and an increased presence of the state in the hop fields. John Cook observed, "It was a mixture [of people working in the hop fields], it wasn't all Indians; it was Blacks and Mexicans."²⁶ Since 1890, Mexican and African American

²² "Fly in Mendocino Ointment," C-R 2, Carton 4, folder 27.

²³ *Dispatch Democrat*, November 5, 1915.

²⁴ *Dispatch Democrat*, November 28, 1924.

²⁵ David Benston compiled, Folder: Hops, Held-Poage House.

²⁶ John Cook, *Voices and Dreams*, 68.

workers replaced Chinese and white ethnic workers in the hop fields.²⁷ The only constant were the Indians. In the mid to late 1930s, the federal government helped diversify hop picking. It allowed workers on Works Progress Administration and State Relief Administration rolls to work in the fields, at the behest of hop farmers in California.²⁸ The state also made its presence known in migrant labor camps. Cook stated, "There was a lot of times we were at government camps. They lived in tents and stuff."²⁹ In the early 1930s, Anita Rome watched Mildred Davis' children while Mildred pick hops, grapes, and prunes in Sonoma County. Rome remembered, "We stayed in camps for the workers. We stayed in cabins or houses that had running water and were fully stocked with stoves."³⁰ After the Wheatland Hop Riot, the federal government paid more attention to the living conditions at hop ranches and other sites of migrant labor.³¹ The new houses and cabins made camp life easier for the patrons and attested to the constant role of the state in the lives of migrant Indian workers.

Indians continued to work on ranches in the area. Many hauled and worked in the hay during the summer.

²⁷ Linda Pitelka suggests that Italians moved out of the hop fields to become "white" in Mendocino County. When they arrived and began working in the hops, whites considered Italians the equals of Indians. Over time, Italians demonstrated an ability for upward mobility, whereas few Indians improved their lot. Pitelka, "Mendocino".

²⁸ "Miscellaneous Articles," C-R 2, carton 4, folder 27.

²⁹ John Cook, *Voices and Dreams*, 68.

³⁰ Anita Rome interview by author, June 22, 2002.

³¹ See Hahamovitch, *Fruits of their Labor*.

Anthropologist George Foster reported that Indians could earn up to three dollars per day working in the hay fields.³² June Britton remembered the work as hot and tiring. She made shocks out of the cut hay, pitched it in wagons, and then unloaded the hay with pitchforks.³³ Hay also fit in the Indians' barter economy. Indians agreed to cut and haul the hay for a white farmer and in return the farmer plowed the Indians' land.³⁴ Other Indians worked as shepherds in the mountains.³⁵

Indian shepherds found an opportunity to meld their ranch work with another job. In the early 1930s, Edith Van Allen Murphey worked on a book about seeds and bulbs in Mendocino County. She told Chauncey Goodrich, "You will be interested to know that I am getting wonderful help from my Indians as far out as South Fork Mt. in Trinity County, in collecting seeds & bulbs. They get into virgin country & I have found some unusual things. The money I pay them is a big help..."³⁶ Indian shepherds were an invaluable labor force for Murphey, "the sheep herders, especially, have plenty of time to mark & collect for me at high altitudes. They have much local pride & are keen competitors in trying to find unusual plants. They take care of what they get, exactly as I tell them to, which

³² Foster, "Summary of Yuki Culture," 155.

³³ Britton interview. See also Armstead Want, *Singing Feather*, 68.

³⁴ Susman, "Round Valley Indians," 52.

³⁵ Ibid., 33; Edith V.A. Murphey to Chauncey Goodrich, December 25, 1931, Goodrich Papers, box 3, folder: Murphey, Edith Van Allen.

³⁶ Edith Van Allen Murphey to Chauncey Goodrich, November 26, 1931, Goodrich Papers, box 3, folder: Murphey, Edith Van Allen.

means a good deal."³⁷ Indian shepherds used their knowledge of the surrounding environment to earn a little money during the Great Depression. However, Murphey's comments suggest the continuing paternalism of some non-Indians. She, like the white ranchers of the 1850s, referred to the Indians in a possessive sense; the Indians were hers. Surely, the context and meaning behind the assumption of ownership had changed in nearly one century, but the pervasive paternalism had not.

Indians also found jobs in Mendocino County's growing logging economy. Claude Hoaglen worked as a tan barker near Weott, California.³⁸ George Wright and Hank Britton traveled throughout California, Oregon, and Washington working in bark camps and other aspects of logging.³⁹ Yet, Edith Van Allen Murphey had little good to say about Indian loggers, "The young people are beginning to drink in excess. They waste their money which they earn in Forest and other camps, and then come home to live off the family men."⁴⁰ Logging camps failed to inculcate proper values in Indians or anyone else.

Other Indians worked with Murphey to make money from household production. In 1934, Murphey took a Wailacki woman to the California state fair to generate excitement

³⁷ Edith Van Allen Murphey to Chauncey Goodrich, December 25, 1931, Goodrich Papers, box 3, folder: Murphey, Edith Van Allen.

³⁸ Claude Hoaglen, *Voices and Dreams*, 93; Claude Hoaglen interview by author, 6/18/02.

³⁹ Rome interview.

⁴⁰ Edith V.A. Murphey to the Friends of the Indians (Santa Barbara), October 30, 1934, C-A 360, carton 8, folder: California Indians II: Round Valley.

for Indian basketry and money for the Indian women. The two women sold baskets and other Indian-made items for \$265 and took orders for much more. Murphey claimed Indians could make and sell, in addition to baskets, bead belts, moccasins, buckskin gloves, hair cinches, tie ropes, pine needle pillows, rag rugs, spurs, bridle-bits, riatas and tanned deerhides.⁴¹ Indian multisource incomes, traditional knowledge, and occupations blended with Murphey's attempt to promote Indian curios in California. Indians made and produced items from deerskin well before the arrival of Americans in the early 1850s. The presence of riatas and other tack suggests the influence of the cowboy occupation in the lives of Indians. In addition, Murphey indicated that some Indians could produce silver-laden spurs, suggesting an Hispanic vaquero influence among the Indians.

State and federal governments sponsored work relief projects in Round Valley and Mendocino County. In 1931, Edith V.A. Murphey informed Chauncey Goodrich, "I induced our Supervisor to talk to the Indian agents together they spent \$1,500.00 on roads through the Reservation which will relieve the unemployment situation somewhat."⁴² Indians flocked to Works Progress Administration jobs. In 1937, Dorothy Reid's father secured a WPA job in Willits

⁴¹ Edith V.A. Murphey to the Friends of the Indians (Santa Barbara), October 30, 1934, C-A 360, carton 8, folder: California Indians II: Round Valley.

⁴² Edith Van Allen Murphey to Chauncey Goodrich, November 26, 1931, Goodrich Papers, box 3, folder: Murphey, Edith Van Allen.

and moved his family.⁴³ WPA jobs were extremely helpful in the winter, when 90% of the Indians were on relief roles.

These jobs provided income during a season of scarce employment. Indians made \$60 a month working for the WPA doing road maintenance.⁴⁴ George Wright and other Indians built a road from Longvale to Covelo.⁴⁵ Between 1937 and 1939, Francis Crabtree, Bernie Hoaglen, Laurence and Willard Leggett built a bridge across the Eel River at Nashmead. Claude Hoaglen attempted to work on this project but was too young at the time. In 1940, the Bureau of Indian Affairs sponsored a celebration to honor the completed project. After the men finished building the bridge, the work crew participated in a picnic and baseball game that commemorated the finished project.⁴⁶

Some government officials believed that work relief programs would not benefit Indians. In the late 1930s, the Soil Conservation Service and the Indian Department considered sponsoring an erosion control project in Round Valley. After the Indian Department's report, E.J. Carpenter, head of erosion control practices in part of California, believed that such a project would benefit neither Indians nor the government. "It has been my personal impression," Carpenter wrote, "that, in general, it is cheaper to support the Indian population by outright

⁴³ Dorothy Reid, *Voices and Dreams*, 247.

⁴⁴ Patterson, *Singing Feather*, 53.

⁴⁵ Rome interview.

subsidy than to attempt to educate them and train them in a white man's economy. This applies particularly to the California Indian population, which perhaps of all Indians were the least industrious or agricultural minded."⁴⁷

According to Carpenter, California Indians were incapable of learning and developing agriculture, despite the fact that they had worked in agriculture for generations.

Mendocino County whites shared many of these prejudiced beliefs and resisted WPA and other work relief projects. Whites in Covelo opposed the WPA because it upset the local labor system, raised the wage scale and gave Indians greater financial security.⁴⁸ At the behest of white farmers and ranchers, the government closed relief roles in the summer.⁴⁹ Overall, the WPA did not alleviate many of the valley's economic problems and did much to augment the strength of ranchers in the valley.

While whites fought WPA projects, they and some Indians objected to the passage of the Indian Reorganization Act. IRA created much controversy and tension within the Round Valley Indian community. Some feared increased government dependency and feared IRA would make them, "sit on the floor and eat acorn soup."⁵⁰ Phenia Willits and Mary Clark represented this part of the

⁴⁶ Francis Crabtree interview by author, March 22, 2002; Francis Crabtree, "My Life Story"; John Rockwell to Fred Crabtree, March 12, 1942, CCC-ID, box 3, folder: 1017.20; Claude Hoaglen interview by author, June 18, 2002.

⁴⁷ E.J. Carpenter to Harry Reddick, April 4, 1939, SCS General Records, box 33, folder: 105.11.

⁴⁸ OIA, 57.

⁴⁹ Susman, "Round Valley Indians," 53.

reservation population. "They said that is the worst thing that could happen to the Indian," recalled Phenia's daughter Ida. "[The government] done enough. Let [the Indian] try to go on, let him be responsible for himself.

You people going to cause them to be nothing...but all you fellows gonna destroy us. Don't let us be depended on that government like that. We got to learn to travel on."

Ida remembered her mother and Clark fighting with Arthur Anderson about the bill, "[Anderson] and my mother would sit around in the yard and discuss the bill...you'd think they were going to a battle the way they do but they were battling with their tongues. Then here would come Aunt Mary [Clark] and they would both attack him."⁵¹ Supporters of IRA, like Anderson, believed that an IRA government would enable Indians to defend themselves against white encroachments.⁵² Both of these arguments turned on conceptions of work and labor. Clark and Willits took a conservative approach and one advocated by Indian agents since their arrival in the 1850s: Indians should strive to be independent of the federal government and needed to learn to work for themselves. Those who favored IRA saw an opportunity to create an economic institution that would rival the power of white ranchers. An Indian government could provide jobs and protect their economic livelihood.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 43.

⁵¹ Ida Soares interview by Acklan Willits, 4/10/90, RVOHP.

⁵² Susman, "Round Valley Indians," 44.

White ranchers understood the Indians' ambivalence towards IRA, and attempted to persuade Indians to vote against the act. Anderson and another IRA supporter Wesley McLane complained, "the poolroom is regarded as the worst evil by the Councilmen who are trying to unite the Indians because there the whites treat Indians to drinks and convince them to oppose Reorganization."⁵³ Whites told Indians they did not need more government assistance, "you're just as good as anyone else. You can go anywhere, buy anything."⁵⁴ Considering Covelo's history - complete with exploitation, segregation and racism - it seemed difficult to believe many Indians would accept this statement. The Bureau of Indian Affairs saw the primary reason for white opposition to the Indian Reorganization Act: It weakened their control in Round Valley. BIA officials argued that whites disliked the Indian Reorganization Act because it empowered Indians, "The act of 1934 stopped these whites from finishing what they started, and the Indians still have a foothold that should be maintained or else it will be back in the mountains for them in a very short while."⁵⁵

Despite protests by white and Indian residents of Covelo, the Indian Reorganization Act passed. The Round Valley Indians voted to approve the Indian Reorganization Act on November 7, 1936. Edith Van Allen Murphey

⁵³ Ibid., 54.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 48.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

reported, "It rained in torrents on the day they had the Election on the Reservation, and many did not vote on that account, but the Reorganization Act carried 5½ to 1."⁵⁶ Of the 838 Indians living in Round Valley, 62 voted for IRA and 18 opposed.⁵⁷ However, Soares believed weather had little to do with the low voter turnout, "although the people went for it[,] the vote wasn't too large because the people didn't really understand or imagine what they were voting for."⁵⁸

Anderson and Wesley McLane, who served as secretary for the tribe, drew up the tribal constitution and corporate charter. The tribal constitution established a seven-member council, and Indians elected Arthur Anderson the first president. The constitution allowed for a wide range of sovereign powers. The Covelo Indian Community had the ability to negotiate with the government, employ legal council, advise the secretary of the interior, appropriate funds, make rules for taxation of members and regulate hunting and fishing. The Council could assign land to its members, and members held this land forever, provided they used the land in an "intelligent and husbandlike manner." The tribal constitution stated that only 30% of the tribal population needed to vote for ratification.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ Edith V.A. Murphey to Mrs. Barker, November 21, 1934, C-A 360, carton 8, folder: California Indians II: Round Valley.

⁵⁷ *Indians at Work*, December 1, 1937, 19.

⁵⁸ Soares interview.

⁵⁹ Constitution and By-Laws of the Covelo Indian Community; Soares interview.

The new tribal government initiated economic endeavors intended to alleviate the poor economic situation in Round Valley. Initially, the IRA government completed a housing project, encouraged small-plot gardens, and provided loans for the purchase of dairy cattle and farm machinery.⁶⁰ Anderson and McLane adopted a plan that called for a cooperative cattle enterprise. The tribal council purchased a large head of cattle and distributed it to certain tribal members. Joe Russ helped herd the cattle from the railroad depot in Dos Rios to Round Valley.⁶¹

Other council members boldly stated that the two million dollar revolving fund would enable the Indians to "buy back the whole valley."⁶² By 1936, only 18,000 of the 43,000 allotted acres of land remained in Indian hands.⁶³ Many Indians lost their allotments when they put their land as collateral against a butcher's or grocery bill. Paying taxes proved to be a difficulty as well. Some tribal members sold their allotments for as low as \$100 or as high as \$250, well below a fair market price.⁶⁴ Allotment ultimately resulted in the dispossession of the Round Valley Indians. By 1990, only one person's family still had title to their original allotment.⁶⁵ Furthermore, leasing was so common that many Indians did

⁶⁰ *Indians at Work*, June 1939, 44.

⁶¹ Russ interview; "Pie" Frazier and Barbara Pina interview by author, March 22, 2002; Susman, "Round Valley Indians," 66.

⁶² Susman, "Round Valley Indians," 66.

⁶³ OIA, 59.

⁶⁴ Patterson, *Singing Feather*, 59.

not have much control over the land. White ranchers leased approximately 90% of Indian land and did not take good care of it.⁶⁶ Whites cared little about the land leased from Indians and caused increasing environmental problems.

Overgrazing and soil erosion plagued the allotments in the 1930s. In turn, this placed a strain on the ranchers.

Late in the Depression, sheep and cattle herds suffered a significant blow. In 1936-37, upwards of 50% of the valley's sheep and between 10-20% of the cattle died from malnourishment.⁶⁷ The council attempted to purchase more land. Ida Soares recalled, "That's when they started buying the land back again, so the Indians can get back, get more land added on to the reservation."⁶⁸

While the Indian Reorganization Act promoted the economic well being of the Round Valley Indians, it was not enough for many Indians. Mendocino County Indians, especially women, migrated to cities to work. Women moved to the San Francisco Bay area to work as domestic servants. Native American women in Mendocino County migrated for a variety of reasons: better jobs, independence and good times. One woman stated, "[There is] no work around here and no one to support me."⁶⁹ Another commented, "My father had eight children and couldn't support us all. I had to get out and shift for

⁶⁵ Ibid., 60.

⁶⁶ Susman, "Round Valley Indians," 51.

⁶⁷ OIA, 60.

⁶⁸ Soares interview.

⁶⁹ Patterson, "Indian Life in the City," 406.

myself."⁷⁰ These women made approximately \$25 per month dusting, cooking and cleaning. However, these jobs became as seasonal as working in the hop fields. In the winter, Pomo women moved to San Francisco and Oakland. In the summer, they came back to Mendocino county for "riverside trysts, easy living, and wages that equaled ten months of dreary housework."⁷¹

By the beginning of World War II, Indians had adapted to the new economic climate of the Great Depression. They expanded their economic bases to include a variety of new labor opportunities, including work relief, anthropology, and urban areas. The era also witnessed the continuing campaign on the part of white ranchers to maintain hegemony in northern California. The Indian Reorganization Act and work relief projects, they reasoned, made Indians too "uppity" for their taste and fought against them. Well-intentioned whites displayed similar ideas: they watched over Indians with paternal care and then insulted them when they failed to live up to their expectations. After nearly a century of contact, some things had not changed in northern California.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 408.

⁷¹ Ibid., 410.

Chapter 9:
A Man with a History:
Charles Wright on the Round Valley Reservation, 1850-
1941

Biographies of American Indians frequently focus on great Indian war, political or religious leaders. Studies of Sitting Bull, Red Cloud, Tenskwatawa and others line the shelves of libraries and bookstores.¹ Yet, few study the lives of less-well known Indians; those who stayed away from treaty negotiations, battlefields, or religious revitalization. The reason for this, obviously, is the lack of sources. However, there are a few opportunities for studies of everyday Indians. This chapter traces the life of Charles Wright, a Concow on the Round Valley Reservation. It serves as a fitting conclusion to this dissertation because Wright's life intersected with the labor history of the Round Valley Indians. It relies on documents gathered at the National Archives, oral history and newspaper accounts to provide as full rendition of Wright's life as possible.

This chapter is an attempt to uncover, to borrow anthropologist Eric Wolf's words, the "hidden history" of a Round Valley Indian. Wolf urged anthropologists and

¹ For instance see, Robert Utley, *The Lance and the Shield: The Life and Times of Sitting Bull* (New York: Ballentine Books, 1993); Robert Larson, *Red Cloud: Warrior-Statesman of the Lakota Sioux* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997); R. David Edmunds, *The Shawnee Prophet* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1985, 1983).

historians to find the hidden histories of those people who adapted to the spread of capitalism during the last five hundred years.² This chapter takes Wolf's call and finds the hidden history of Charles Wright.

Wright was born in 1849, among the Concow living in Butte County, California. Wright was born during one of the most turbulent periods in his tribe's history. We know little of Wright's childhood, but we can infer much. The California Gold Rush brought an influx of white Americans into their homeland. At first, some Concow worked in the mines, but whites quickly excluded all California Indians from the new enterprise. In the mid-1850s, white settlement, cattle and other livestock compromised the Concow's subsistence base of hunting game and harvesting wild food sources. In order to avoid starvation, Concows killed livestock, which brought the reprisals of white ranchers. In 1855, some Concows moved to the Nome Lackee Reservation, the Mendocino Reservation, and to the Nome Cult Farm, later known as the Round Valley Reservation. By the Civil War, most Concows who lived on a reservation resided in Round Valley, after Nome Lackee and Mendocino closed. Many Concows concluded conditions in Round Valley were no better than they were in Butte County, and the

² Wolf, *Europe and the People without History*.

Concows left the reservation in 1861. The following year, the government removed the Concow back to Round Valley, at the expense of 32 Indian lives who died in transit. Round Valley Indians annually commemorate this event with the Nome Cult Walk. The turmoil of the Gold Rush and Indian removal in central California affected Wright's family, but we do not know the details. He grew up without a mother and father because both died during the Gold Rush and his grandmother raised Wright in Round Valley.³

On the reservation, Wright participated in the recreational life that Indians and whites created. His athleticism caught the eye of local whites. He entered Indian foot races, on which local whites gambled. His Concow name, Wah-la-de, meant "Running."⁴ Before the arrival of Americans, Concows participated in foot races and other athletic endeavors. Contact and the move to the reservation transformed the meaning of foot races. On the reservation, they were for the enjoyment and recreation of

³ For the history of Indians in the Gold Rush see, Hurtado, *Indian Survival*. For an overview of the Concow's history, see *California*, 385; Coyote Man, *Destruction of the People* (Berkeley: Brother William Press, 1973), 59-56; "Potter Manuscript". Specific information on Wright came from Anita Rome interview by author, June 21, 2002; *Willits News*, July 26, 1940; 1928 MS Census, no. 3793.

⁴ *Willits News*, July 26, 1940. For Indian foot races and the cultural impulse behind them see, Gendar, *Grass Games & Moon Races*, 101-04 and Joseph Oxendine, *American Indian Sports Heritage* (Champaign: Human Kinetics, Inc., 1988), 67-90. For Indian foot races in Round Valley see, Carranco and Beard, *Genocide and Vendetta*.

white spectators, but also provided an opportunity for Indians to earn some money.

Wright spent his youth working on and off the reservation. Wright, and other Indians, protested working conditions that existed on the reservation. In the late 1870s, Indians demanded wages and better working conditions on the reservation. When agent Henry Sheldon refused to provide these benefits, Indians fled the reservation and purchased land elsewhere. In 1878, Wright and 30 other Indians pooled \$100 and purchased seven acres in Coyote Valley.⁵ This transaction demonstrated not only Wright's resistance to Sheldon's administration, but that he supported communal land held in common for all Indians.

Wright did not stay in the Coyote Valley. Despite his opposition to Sheldon, Wright secured an agency position. On April 1, 1880, Sheldon hired Wright as a herder and gave him a salary of \$120 per year. By that time, he had married a Concow woman named Flora and owned three horses and three pigs.⁶ Perhaps Sheldon was trying to break up opposition. James Jameson also purchased land in the Coyote Valley and Sheldon hired him as the reservation's

⁵ L.B. Frazier to H.B. Sheldon, November 21, 1878, M234, 50: 859-60.

⁶ 1880 MS Census; Receipts and Disbursements, box 105, letterbook: Cash Book, 1875-1895.

assistant carpenter.⁷ As a young, married member of a large tribe, Wright resembled other agency workers on the reservation. Nevertheless, Wright's tenure as a reservation herder was sporadic. After receiving his salary on June 12, 1880, he was not on the agency payroll until December 1882, where he remained until the end of 1884.⁸

A stable family life was uncommon in Round Valley, as Wright's experience demonstrates. By 1885, Wright had a new wife, Rosa (age 19), and they had a son named Lincoln. This marriage ended sometime after August 31, 1887. Wright suspected Rosa was cheating on him, "So one time when he was going to work and would be gone for several days he came back early and caught her with Walter Clark....He held them at gun point and marched them to a preacher and made them get married legally."⁹

Wright remained single until 1893, when he married Mary. They had eight children and were married until 1915, when Mary died of tuberculosis. This left Charles alone with four children (three had died and their eldest

⁷ Frazier to Sheldon, November 21, 1878, M234, 50: 859-60; Receipts and Disbursements, box 105, letterbook: Cash Book, 1875-1895.

⁸ Receipts and Disbursements, box 105, letterbook: Cash Book, 1875-1895.

⁹ M595, roll 447:11; Eva Wright-Peters interview with Floyd and Deanna Barney, January, 1987 (manuscript in author's possession). The last time Charles and Rosa lived in the same house was the 1887 census, which was completed on August 31, 1887. M595, roll 447:93.

daughter, Kittie married Leland Fulwilder, Sr.).¹⁰ In 1916, Wright married Madora Major (Wailacki). They had four children - George, Eva, Ben, and Anita. In 1923, Madora died from tuberculosis, and Wright never remarried.

Two of Charles' children met violent ends. In 1923, Mary Wright married Rolly Ward and in January 1924, she gave birth to a son, Ransome. However, Rolly Ward suspected Mary of cheating on him with an Indian Doctor. In March 1924, Ward broke down the door to his own house and shot Mary through the temple with a pistol while she held Ransome. Mary's brother, Lewis, heard about the murder when he was herding cattle in the mountains. While he investigated the case, someone roped him, pulled him off his horse, and drug him to death. Local law officials never investigated the case and attributed Lewis' death to intoxication. Meanwhile, law officials tracked Rolly Ward to an abandoned cabin in the mountains. The police broke down the door and what followed is open to speculation.

¹⁰ Charles and Mary's eight children were Kittie (d.o.b. 1894), Charles, Jr. (d.o.b. 1896), Grace (d.o.b. 1898), Ned (d.o.b. 1900), Lewis (d.o.b. 1902), Ransom (d.o.b. 1904), David (d.o.b. 1908), and Mary (d.o.b. 1909). M595, 447: 228, 249, 291, 337, 391, 449, 558-59. Mary was still with Charles in 1910 (M595, 12: 491), but was not with the family in 1915 (M595, 448: 10).

Law officials claimed that Ward shot himself in the heart, but Round Valley Indians believed the police shot him.¹¹

Even though his family life was turbulent, Wright fostered an organized economic livelihood. He invested his earnings in livestock and cattle. On February 17, 1910, he sold cattle to the agency for \$33.04.¹² On November 6, 1917, he paid the agency \$59.70 for a rent payment on a lease for his heifers.¹³ Reservation agents favored former agency employees when they purchased cattle for the boarding school or leased land to Indians. It is apparent, though, Wright owned a small herd. Wright made only two transactions with the agency between 1907 and 1914, and three between 1917 and 1919. As with other Round Valley Indians, Wright oriented his agriculture and livestock enterprise toward subsistence rather than the market.

Wright required family labor on his small ranch, which often brought him into conflict with the Round Valley agent and boarding school officials. In 1917, Wright's son Lewis attended Sherman. In May, Charles wanted Lewis to come

¹¹ For the Rolly Ward incident see, *Dispatch Democrat*, March 28, 1924; Eva Wright-Peters interview with Floyd and Deanna Barney, January, 1987, manuscript in author's possession; Agnes Duncan and Leland Fulwider interview by Les Lincoln, 6/22/90, RVOHP. For the death of Lewis Wright see, Wright-Peters interview, January 1987; *Dispatch Democrat*, May 16, 1924; Albert Want, *Mendocino County Remembered*, 2: 257; Leo Foster interview by Floyd Barney, August 1992.

¹² Receipts and Disbursements, box 105, letterbook: Records of Receipts and Disbursements, 1907-1914.

¹³ Receipts and Disbursements, box 106, letterbook: Records of Receipts and Disbursements, 1914-1917.

home in order to help care for the family's horses. Round Valley superintendent W.W. McConihe attempted to dissuade Charles of this idea, but Charles was unyielding.¹⁴ Frank Conser granted Lewis permission to return to Covelo, but informed McConihe he lacked the funds to pay for it, "The boys whose terms expire and must go home we will give an opportunity to go out to work and earn sufficient money to take them home."¹⁵ Charles was angry when he discovered that his son would have to pay to come home. McConihe reported, "[Charles] does not think it right that the boy will have to earn money enough to get home on as he needs him very much."¹⁶ If Lewis had to earn his fare home, it would delay his arrival and keep Charles a hand short on the ranch.

During the 1920s, Wright continued his subsistence economy. His daughter Anita remembered he gathered cattle and horses for white ranchers. His partner was a Mexican vaquero and the men would be gone for days at a time when they rounded up cattle. Wright supplemented his income by making rawhide riatas, and horsehair cinches. In the winter, he made shingles and shakes, selling these items to

¹⁴ W.W. McConihe to F.M. Conser, May 23, 1917, Student Case Files, folder: Wright, Lewis.

¹⁵ F.M. Conser to W.W. McConihe, May 29, 1917, Student Case Files, folder: Wright, Lewis.

¹⁶ W.W. McConihe to F.M. Conser, June 19, 1917, Student Case Files, folder: Wright, Lewis.

people building homes in Round Valley. His family also cultivated a garden and raised pigs and chickens for household consumption and sale in Covelo.¹⁷ In the 1920s, Wright had developed an efficient household economy. He blended wage labor, household production, agriculture, and hunting to ensure the subsistence of his family.

As with other people in rural America, Wright felt the weight of the economic hard times before the stock market crashed. In 1928, Wright sold five acres to Peter Clark (another Concow in Round Valley) for \$150.¹⁸ The money Wright earned from this transaction would be helpful in the cash poor area and during the nation's dire economic situation. Yet, it does not fully explain Wright's decision. By 1928, Wright was nearing 80 and he could not continue to take care of his allotments. Wright and his family had lived at the allotment the federal government had originally given to him and Mary in the 1890s. His daughter Jenny helped with much of the ranch work after Mary passed away in the 1910s. After Jenny married, Wright moved to Madora's allotment in Halls Valley, and relied on

¹⁷ Rome interview; Receipts and Disbursements, box 105, letterbook: Records of Receipts and Disbursements, 1907-1914; Receipts and Disbursements, box 106, letterbook: Records of Receipts and Disbursements, 1917-1919; Col. L.A. Dorrington to Charles Wright, February 17, 1922, RV-149. Wright was delinquent on his payment for more than a year and Dorrington requested that he pay his balance.

¹⁸ Peter Clark to Supt. L.A. Dorrington, January 30, 1928, RV-149.

the assistance of his four children - Ben, George, Eva, and Anita.¹⁹

In 1929, Wright's health took a turn for the worse. A mild stroke left him incapacitated. George Biggar, a storeowner in Covelo and future state senator, wrote on Wright's behalf, "At the present time Mr. Wright is unable to work and if he has any money due him from [the Indian] office it will be needed very shortly."²⁰ Wright's health improved quickly, though. Agency farmer Frank Mueller informed the Superintendent for California a few weeks after Wright's stroke, "he is able to do his chores, such as milking his cow etc."²¹

Still, the stroke and his age prevented Wright from working as he had in the past. It was difficult for Wright to find ranch work, and he compensated for this loss of income. First, Mendocino County paid Wright \$15 per month to send his children to Red Rock School, located in the mountains north of Round Valley. The county paid California Indians to send their children to alternative school districts in order to appease segregationist-minded whites in rural communities, like Covelo. Second, Wright and his family turned to local markets. In September 1929,

¹⁹ Rome interview.

²⁰ G.M. Biggar to Col. L.A. Dorrington, September 16, 1929, RV-149.

²¹ Frank Mueller to L.A. Dorrington, September 19, 1929, RV-149.

he sold some hogs that netted him \$60, and his son George picked hops and fruit in the Ukiah Valley.²² After his stroke and because of his advanced age, Wright had a difficult time caring for his family. Out of work, he turned to county relief, selling livestock, and his son's labor.

Sympathetic whites rushed to Wright's rescue. In December 1929, Edith Van Allen Murphey gave clothes to Mueller for the Wright family. After Wright's daughter Anita broke her leg falling from her horse while riding the six miles from their home to the Red Rock School, Murphey wrote various Indian charity organizations in California to cover medical expenses and provide the best treatment for Anita's injury.²³ Despite aid, the condition of the Wright family continued to worsen in the eyes of sympathetic whites. Nearly one year later, Virginia Coddington, Charles' neighbor, purchased mattresses for the family, and described their condition, "Charlie is so weak and blind and those little girls are so undernourished and the little Nita is so thin...."²⁴

²² L.A. Dorrington to George Biggar, September 17, 1929; L.A. Dorrington to Frank Mueller, September 17, 1929 both in RV-149.

²³ Mabel Washburn to Mrs. Barker, January 19, 1930; Mrs. Barker to Edith Van Allan Murphey, January 21, 1930 both in C-A 360, carton 8, folder: California Indians: Round Valley.

²⁴ Frank Mueller to L.A. Dorrington, December 17, 1929; Mrs. George Coddington to Mr. Mueller, n.d. both in RV-149.

The public display of affection for Wright was genuine, because whites in Round Valley considered him a "good Indian." For instance, Biggar remarked, "Charles has reared the children and he has cared for them in fine shape."²⁵

Even though non-Indians considered Wright a charity case, Wright or his family did not consider themselves destitute. His daughter, Anita stated, "I didn't think we were poor. We fed ourselves. We raised our chickens and pigs."²⁶ There is some truth to Anita's statements and it is a general one shared by current members of the Round Valley Community. Charlie and his family did not depend on other people for their food. Rather than being impoverished, Wright's living conditions - relying on a county stipend, subsistence farming, and the labor of his children - represented a well thought out strategy for survival.

In December 1930, Wright relocated his family to an allotment in Covelo. Mueller explained, "The reason Charlie did not consent to moving before now was, that he wanted his children to finish the term at the Red Hill School."²⁷ Moving to Covelo was a risky endeavor and it

²⁵ G.M. Biggar to Col. L.A. Dorrington, September 16, 1929, RV-149.

²⁶ Rome interview.

²⁷ Frank Mueller to Mrs. George C. Coddington, December 1, 1930, RV-149.

ensnared him in debt. Between 1930 and 1931, he spent nearly \$130 at Biggar's store, a substantial amount for someone who could not work. Most of his expenses were items his family could not or did not make at home, such as flour, coffee, and clothing. However, he spent \$13.25 on bacon - his third most expensive item - and \$1.50 on potatoes and onions. These transactions suggest that Wright's subsistence farming and livestock had failed to provide for the family's needs. The receipts from Biggar's Mercantile Store imply that Wright and his family became more dependent on outside sources for their food when they lived in Covelo. The move to Covelo forced Wright to assume other expenses as well. He purchased a wagon from George Coddling for five dollars, hay for his horses, wood for his stove, and shoes for his children.²⁸

However, relocating to Covelo was temporary. Wright and his family moved back to Hulls Valley in the spring, and Indian officials worried about Wright's ability to care for his family. Mueller wrote to O.H. Lipps, superintendent in Sacramento, "Charlie Wright, who is trying to raise his children in an honorable way, is badly in need of assistance on account of his age and bad

²⁸ Frank L. Mueller to Mr. Swengel, January 16, 1931 and Frank Mueller to Mr. Swengel, January 19, 1931 both in RV-149.

physical condition." Mueller added, "I recommended some time ago that he be given a regular monthly allowance as long as his funds would last...." Lipps responded to Mueller and agreed to grant Wright a monthly allowance of \$20, explaining "Instead of paying him a monthly allowance of \$50.00, which would soon exhaust his funds, we believe it would be best to give him a smaller allowance now that he would have enough remaining to carry him through the winter."²⁹ Agents understood Wright's dilemma: winter was the time of want in the Wright household and when they family purchased items from Biggar's store. A small monthly stipend might relieve Wright's dependence on outside sources for food.

Wright continued his seasonal migrations. He stayed in Hulls Valley in the spring and summer, but in the winter he returned to Covelo. Once in Covelo, Wright accumulated debts, which his small monthly allowance helped cover. For instance, in February 1932, Wright purchased two tiers of wood from Robert Stillwell for six dollars.³⁰ Even though Wright accumulated debts after 1930, he attempted to minimize his dependence on the market economy. In the spring and summer, Wright and his family returned to Hulls

²⁹ Frank Mueller to O.H. Lipps, June 13, 1931 and O.H. Lipps to Frank Mueller, June 17, 1931 both in RV-149. Wright had \$254.18 in his account in June 1931.

³⁰ Charlie Wright to O.H. Lipps, February 11, 1932, RV-149.

Valley, raised their garden, chickens, pigs, and relied on the wage labor of the family. In the winter, though, there were fewer opportunities for his children to work, they had depleted food stores, and an increased demand for clothing. Wright attempted to balance his seasons of plenty and his seasons of want, but it was extremely difficult under the precarious economic conditions and because of Wright's age.

The situation in Wright's household became more unstable the following year. In March 1933, Charles Wright approached Biggar about turning his children - Anita, Ben, and Eva aged nine, eleven and thirteen respectively - over to the jurisdiction of Mendocino County. According to Biggar, Wright had lost control of his children, "They refuse to obey him and are constantly running around to all kinds of parties and with all kinds of people. He says they stay away [at] nights and he does not know where they are." The activities of one of his daughters demonstrated the extent to which Wright had lost control, "He says that he thinks that Eva, the oldest, is in the family way...Mr. Mueller has been doing all he can to help Charles look after the children, but it is like trying to regulate a bunch of gophers."³¹

³¹ G.M. Biggar to W.S. Van Dyke, March 6, 1933, RV-149.

Edith Van Allan Murphey concurred with Biggar's assessment. The family constantly needed clothes and wrote, "Eva is beginning to roam around."³² Anita had faint recollections about her sister and brother's wanderings. One day, the trio rode their horses to Covelo. As they attempted to return home, Ben and Eva stopped in the foothills and declared that they were returning to Covelo. Anita had to ride home alone and in the dark.³³ Biggar and Murphey shared beliefs about Wright and his family. They were desperately poor, and one of his daughters needed assistance before anything immoral happened to her.

Mendocino County's Probation Officer William Van Dyke inquired about sending the children to an Indian boarding school. Superintendent Lipps doubted that prospect replying, "From the description given by you of the children it is very doubtful if any of our reservation schools would be desirous of accepting them, or would accept them, as you know our schools are not operated as reform schools, but are operated only as educational institutions."³⁴

³² Edith V.A. Murphey to Friends of Indians (Santa Barbara), October 30, 1934, C-A 360, Carton 8, Folder: California Indians II: Round Valley.

³³ Rome interview.

³⁴ Will Van Dyke to O.H. Lipps, March 8, 1933; O.H. Lipps to George M. Biggar, March 7, 1933; O.H. Lipps to Van Dyke, March 9, 1933 all in RV-149.

The wheels of bureaucracy moved slowly in the Wright case, and his family's economic situation deteriorated. His monthly allowance dropped from \$20 to \$15 in November 1934 because only \$40.76 remained in his account. The Great Depression squeezed Wright's accounts. He could not rely on lease income filling his coffers because fewer white and Indian ranchers leased land in the 1930s. Wright finally exhausted his account in March, 1935.³⁵ Meanwhile Wright supplemented his income with work relief. In the summer of 1935, anthropologist Frank Essene hired Charles and Eva as informants and interpreters. The two worked for a few weeks on Essene's project.³⁶

It took some time for an Indian boarding school to accept Wright's children. In 1937, Anita attended the Carson Indian School in Carson City, Nevada. She disliked the boarding school, "They had two matrons," Anita remembered. "One was named Miss Winger. She was a dumpy woman with blondish hair she wore in a bun and she walked like a sergeant. She was mean to the little children."³⁷ As much as Anita disliked the school, Charles needed her at home even more. He wrote to the school superintendent,

³⁵ O.H. Lipps to Charles Wright, November 16, 1934; M.E. Gravier to O.H. Lipps, December 6, 1934; O.H. Lipps to M.E. Gravier, December 12, 1934; O.H. Lipps to W.S. Kreigh, March 20, 1935 all in RV-149.

³⁶ Essene to Kroeber, July 5, 1935.

³⁷ Rome interview.

"[Anita] had told me quite a few times that she was lonesome and didn't care to stay at that place....I really need her to help me with the house work." Anita reiterated these claims to school officials, telling them that her sister, Eva, and her husband were picking hops and could not help their father with the housework.³⁸ As with his son Lewis Wright two decades previous, Charles' demand for household labor put him in conflict with the mission of Indian education.

School officials disagreed with Charles and Anita's complaints. They considered it Anita's best interest to stay at the school. The school superintendent explained, "Anita has gained quite a bit of weight since she came here last fall. She is still thin but not as thin as she was, and she is getting extra food every day." Superintendent Roy Nash also disagreed with Wright. He thought Charles had enough family help to tide him over until Anita returned from school. He wrote to Charles, "You will have two daughters living in the Valley who will be able to aid you in caring for your house; also, your son will be there to secure wood and to do other chores for you. Under these conditions, as stated above, it is felt that Anita should

³⁸ Charles Wright to Miss Hamner, March 1, 1937 and Miss Hamner to Nash, March 6, 1937 both in RV-149.

stay at school until the term is finished."³⁹ Clearly, though, Charles and Anita disagreed with the officials' view. As an elderly member of the reservation, Charles needed all of the assistance he could secure. Government officials stood in his way.

It is quite possible Charles Wright approached George Biggar in 1933 and asked him to arrange to have the county take custody of his children. On the other hand, Biggar may have been acting on his own accord. Wright was one of his customers and frequently in debt to him. In addition, Biggar concentrated on the morality of Wright's children, especially Eva. Even though he considered Wright one of the good Indians on the reservation, Biggar wrote, "there are some mighty tough characters among the younger generation on the Reservation, and they are leading these youngsters into serious trouble."⁴⁰ Biggar quite possibly acted in what he considered Wright's best interests. After all, paternalism suited Indian reformers well in the early twentieth century.

Wright, though, may have had a hand in the decision, though not in the way Biggar interpreted. Historian Brenda Child argues many Indian families viewed boarding schools

³⁹ Alida C. Bowler to Charles Wright, March 10, 1937 and Roy Nash to Charles Wright, March 11, 1937 both in RV-149.

⁴⁰ G.M. Biggar to W.S. Van Dyke, March 6, 1933, RV-149.

as a place to send children during dire times. Indian agents frequently sent orphaned children or those from impoverished families to the boarding schools.⁴¹ Wright possibly saw the boarding schools as a place to send his children for the winter, when times were hard and debts accumulated. After all, Wright requested to have Anita return in the spring and summer of 1937, when he would need her with the garden and tending animals in Hulls Valley.

In the twilight years of his life, Wright continued to rely on his multi-source income. In March 1939, he purchased wood from William Brown to heat his home. In 1940, the family requested \$20 from Superintendent Nash for an unknown purpose.⁴² On July 22, 1940, Charles Wright passed away at the age of 91. Wright's last will and testament demonstrates the complexities and problems that the Dawes Act created nearly 53 years earlier. He had an entire allotment (which he inherited from his deceased daughter Jenny) and interest in 14 other allotments.

⁴¹ Brenda Child found a similar situation in her study of Indian boarding schools. *Boarding School Seasons*, 9-25.

⁴² Charles Wright to Superintendent Roy Nash, March 9, 1939; Eva Wright, Anita Wright and Charles Wright to Roy Nash, February 23, 1940 both in RV-149. In December 1938, Wright purchased wood from an unknown person for \$17.34 (Charles Wright to Roy Nash, December 6, 1938, RV-149). He also owed Clyde Hopper \$5 for an unknown reason (Charles Wright to Roy Nash, December 8, 1939, RV-149).

Apparently, he did not have any other real or personal property.⁴³

The story of Charles Wright's life is a fitting conclusion to this manuscript. His life spanned the time parameters of this study (roughly 1850 to 1945), and his labor experiences intersected with the themes discussed above. His life reflected the demographic patterns of agency workers in the late nineteenth century. Throughout his life, Wright remade his household economy, blending new opportunities with older economic practices. He and his family relied on wage labor, hunting, agriculture, and relief programs. The labor requirements of such an economy led him into a confrontation with agents of assimilation. On two occasions, he requested his children to return to the reservation because he needed their labor. Finally, the manner in which non-Indians treated Wright was illustrative of the paternalism that existed in the federal government. Seen as part of the "deserving poor," relief workers and members of the state government acted in what they saw as Wright's best interests. His history of survival is that of all California Indians. We should marvel at Wright's survival. He lived through some of the

⁴³ Last Will and Testament of Charles Wright, July 13, 1939; Roy Nash to John H. Anderson, October 10, 1940 both in RV-149.

most dangerous periods for California Indians. California Indians rarely lived to the age of 91 after contact. With death rates far exceeding birth rates since 1850, Wright's survival to an advanced age was not preordained. Even though he outlasted his wives and some of his children, he laid a foundation for the demographic revival of California Indians.⁴⁴

⁴⁴ Sherburne Cook offers the most complete study of California Indian demography from precontact to the 1970s in *The Population of the California Indians, 1769-1970* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976).

Conclusion

Between 1850 and 1941, labor lay at the heart of Indian life on the Round Valley Reservation. While working, Indians and white ranchers made and remade racial and ethnic definitions of Indians. Between 1850 and 1865, white ranchers considered Indian workers docile and pliant. These so-called "pet" Indians confirmed the stereotype many whites had about California Indians: they refused to fight back and accepted their lowly status. Whites considered Indians who refused to work expendable, and troublemakers who deserved the campaign of genocide that many whites perpetrated against them. The racial definitions that whites created justified their expansion in northern California: Indian workers accepted white domination, while unemployed Indians deserved violence.

After the Civil War, racial definitions of Round Valley Indians changed to fit the needs of white ranchers. During the debate over allotment, white ranchers argued off-reservation labor had civilized Indians. They were ready to receive their allotments, but still needed to work for white ranchers. Allotment, they believed, achieved two goals: reservation land and Indian labor. In the twentieth century, whites defined Indians as good workers, but not fit to mingle with white society.

Whites segregated schools, eating areas, and other public places thereby demarcating the line between Indians and whites. During the Great Depression, white ranchers opposed IRA and work relief because the Indian New Deal threatened local hegemony. The worksite was the place where Indians and whites interacted on a daily basis and where whites made and remade racial definitions of California Indians.

Labor served the broader goals of federal Indian policy as well. Between 1850 and 1880, Indian agents and federal officials believed labor civilized Indians and controlled their worst excesses. However, corrupt agents and officials appropriated Indian labor to profit for themselves. During the debate over allotment, federal officials disagreed with white ranchers. Labor had *failed* to civilize Indians. Indians were lazy, lacked the desire for upward mobility, and spent their wages profligately. Agents recommended allotment as the panacea for their degraded state.

In the twentieth century, federal officials acquiesced to the idea Indians were agricultural wage workers. They proposed federal boarding school programs and World War I as opportunities to train Indians to be better agricultural workers once they returned to northern

California. The Great Depression provided opportunities for a new direction in federal Indian policy and a continuing belief about Indians. The Indian Reorganization Act was an opportunity for Indian self-determination, but relief programs, especially those for the elderly, espoused a lingering paternalism. The federal government hoped to train Indians to be good workers: labor would civilize California Indians, control their actions, and the state acted as labor agent, distributing Indian workers to centers of economic activity.

Contrasting these ideas about Indian labor, Indians used labor to resist, accommodate and adapt to the process of colonization. Theirs was a history of adjustment and adaptation within narrowing boundaries. From their perspective, wage labor offered an avenue for physical, cultural and social survival. Between 1850 and 1865, they worked on and off the reservation to protect themselves from whites. These efforts failed to protect them in all instances, but, despite the ideas espoused by white ranchers, Indians resisted federal and civilian incursions and abuses. Between 1865 and 1880, Indians demanded cash wages from federal and civilian employers, suggesting the way Indians adapted to the labor system.

Indians also supported allotment because it would secure their economic goals: land in common and control over their labor. The first three decades of the twentieth century represented the full flourishing of Indian labor. From beginning to end, Indians incorporated agricultural labor into their seasonal and multi-source economies. Shearing sheep and picking hops blended with subsistence agriculture, seasonal harvesting and hunting to provide subsistence incomes for Indians.

California Indian culture flourished at agricultural worksites. Indians disseminated and practiced the Earth Lodge and Bole Maru religion in roundhouses erected on hop ranches. Further, Indians articulated tribal identities in the workplace and market economy that countered the racialized notions that white ranchers had created. Finally, Indians played when their work concluded. Their leisure activities blended old practices, such as shinny, wrestling and grass game, with new opportunities, such as the Fourth of July, baseball and the saloon culture. During the Great Depression, Indians modified their occupations to meet new demands. Those who stayed on the reservation took advantage of the opportunities provided by work relief projects and anthropologists, and envisioned the Indian Reorganization

Act as a way to promote Indian economic activities and a brighter future.

What, though, does Round Valley's labor history tell us about broader historical issues? Since the publication of historian Frederick Hoxie's classic article on the Cheyenne River Sioux, historians of American Indians have examined the ways in which American Indians made and remade the reservation environment.¹ While certainly political activities and cultural change played a prominent role in Round Valley, wage labor provides a new perspective from which to study these themes. Round Valley Indians constantly remade the reservation. Their labor erected buildings, plowed fields, and built roads. They provisioned the agency with their crops, livestock, and jobs as freighters. Indians do not merely sit around reservations waiting for their rations. Rather, they actively changed their indigenous homelands to suit new circumstances.

¹ Frederick Hoxie, "From Prison to Homeland: The Cheyenne River Reservation Before World War I," in *The Plains Indians of the Twentieth Century*, Peter Iverson, ed. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1985), 55-75. See also Fowler, *Shared Symbols, Contested Meanings*; Melissa Meyer, *The White Earth Tragedy: Ethnicity and Dispossession at a Minnesota Anishinaabe Reservation, 1889-1920* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994); and Morris Foster, *Being Comanche: A Social History of an American Indian Community* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1991) for excellent examples of community and reservation histories.

Institutions such as reservations and boarding schools were distinctly "Indian institutions": made with the sweat and toil of Indian workers.

This dissertation also reveals how Indians contributed to economic growth in states and the nation. In California, scholars have tended to focus on the contributions of Mexican and Chinese workers. They, many people assert, were the backbone of the agricultural and industrial working class in the state.² Yet, before and alongside them, California Indians picked fruit and other crops, worked on railroads, and cut down timber. For more than two centuries, California Indians have contributed to the state's growth.

After examining Round Valley's labor history, we need to rethink how Americans classified and racialized Indians. Historian Richard White once wrote, "The mounted warrior of the Great Plains has proved to be the most enduring stereotype of the American Indian, but like most stereotypes this one conceals more than it reveals....the heroic-resistance approach to plains history reduces these tribes who did not offer organized and

² Daniel, *Bitter Harvest*; McWilliams, *Factories in the Field*; Ernesto Galaraza, *Farm Workers and Agri-Business in California, 1947-1960* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1977); Sucheng Chan, *This Bittersweet Soil: The Chinese in California Agriculture, 1860-1910* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986).

armed resistance to the white American invaders, and who indeed often aided them against other tribes, to the position of either foolish dupes of the whites or of traitors to their race."³ What happens, though, when the image of American Indians is changed to include sheep shearers and migrant farm workers? This dissertation argues White Americans interpreted Round Valley Indians through the prism of "noble savagery" and the workplace. I hope that this dissertation will spark future studies of the issues of labor, race, and American Indians.

Finally for the study of California Indians, it is apparent California Indians were not merely the victims of wanton slaughter and genocide. Rather, by working they survived some of the worst acts perpetrated against Indians in North America and remain viable political entities today. One need only look at the way California Indians rallied behind Proposition 1A in 2000 to understand the continuing presence of Indians in

³ Richard White, "The Winning of the West: The Expansion of the Western Sioux in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," *Journal of American History* 65 (September, 1978), 319-43.

California.⁴ As with other American Indians, California Indians did not disappear after the turn of the century.

Round Valley's labor history also allows us to make comparisons with other American Indian groups. Usually, historians treat California's Indian history as an anomaly: it is a story of genocide and "vanishing Indians" like Ishi. However, in the twentieth century, groups such as the Navajo, Winnebago, and Tsimshian shared experiences with California Indians. Mountain Wolf Woman (Winnebago) explained to anthropologist Nancy Lurie the Winnebago spent the summers working in cranberry bogs in Wisconsin and Michigan. They relied on multisource incomes - hunting, harvesting, small-plot gardens, and wage labor - and family units.⁵ Her descriptions and other studies of Indian labor emphasize the importance of kinship and subsistence economies in American Indian labor. Wage labor, like boarding schools, was a common experience and unites Indians across the continent. Yet, this study seeks to expand

⁴ For the political organization of California Indians and its connection to gaming see Michael Lombardi, "Long Road Traveled I: From the Treaty of Temecula to the Pala Compact," "The Long Road Traveled II: Tribal Self-Sufficiency and the Battle for Proposition 1A," and "The Long Road Traveled III: California Indian Self-Reliance and the Battle for 1A,"

<http://www.cigna.com/facts/history.php> accessed April 4, 2003.

⁵ Nancy Lurie, *Mountain Wolf Woman, Sister of Crashing Thunder* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1966), 8-9. See also, O'Neill, "Navajo Households"; Menzies and Butler, "Working in the Woods," 409-30.

our discussions of American Indian labor. It asks historians to look beyond the workplace, to include such themes as recreation and religion, and to think about other jobs, including ethnographic informants. That way, we can provide a more complete history of American Indian labor.

This project also asks historians to expand their notion of the working class to include American Indians. Typically, scholars ignore Indian workers because they contradict the stereotypic views of American Indians, and American Indians did not usually join labor unions.⁶ Indeed, Claude Hogalen stated one time a man tried to organize Indian migrant workers, but it failed.⁷ However, similarities exist between what is considered the American working class and Round Valley Indians. Both faced the problems of moving from a preindustrial to an industrial workplace. This precipitated contests over the meaning of work and efforts on the part of workers to control aspects of the workplace.⁸ Historians Ira Berlin and Philip Morgan document similar transitions,

⁶ Kurt Peters provides an example of the tenuous relationship between Laguna Pueblo workers and unions in "Watering the Flower: Laguna Pueblo and the Santa Fe Railroad, 1880-1943," in *Native Americans and Wage Labor*, 177-97.

⁷ Hoaglen interview.

⁸ See Gutman, "Work, Culture, and Society," 531-88 and Montgomery, *Worker's Control*.

difficulties, and adjustments for African slaves. At the workplace, slaves and masters worked out the limits of labor appropriation.⁹ Likewise, this dissertation demonstrates ethnicity cut across class lines in terms of social organization. As with workers in cities eastern and Midwestern cities, such as Worcester and Chicago, Round Valley Indians entered the workplace, but maintained their cultural and ethnic identities.¹⁰ Finally, this dissertation suggests the similarities in racial and ethnic definitions of workers. "White" Americans created racial and ethnic definitions of African Americans, Hispanics, and Irish workers in the workplace. Round Valley Indians were valuable contributors to the streams of migrant labor in California until World War II, and historians should no longer ignore their contribution.

Of course, the working experience for Round Valley Indians differed from that of other workers in the United States. For instance, the federal government had an almost omnipresent role in Indian workers' lives. Indians lived, worked, and played on a creation of the federal government. Second, Round Valley Indians, as Hoaglen's

⁹ See Berlin and Morgan, eds., *Cultivation and Culture*.

¹⁰ For ethnicity, race and the working class see Cohen, *Making a New Deal* and Melvyn Dubofsky, *Industrialism and the American Worker, 1865-1920*, 3rd edition, (Wheeling, IL: Harlan Davidson, 1996), 9-18.

comments suggested, ignored worker movements. During interviews with Round Valley residents, I asked whether there were unions or strikes where they worked. No one remembered Indians in these activities. Finally, Indians maintained distinctive practices. Indian labor was not solitary, as it was for many factory workers, but a family and communal event.

Between 1941 and 1990, the world in which Round Valley Indians worked changed yet again. During World War II, Indians flocked to urban areas to work in defense industries. "Some, like myself, left in the 1940s to get out [Round Valley] to work," said Norma Knight. "We wanted more money and education and [to] be able to fend for ourselves."¹¹ Dorothy Reid moved to Los Angeles and worked in an airplane factory. Others, such as Wayne Cox and Ida Soares, left Round Valley to work in the shipyards.¹² As with many minorities, World War II provided new labor opportunities in defense work. However, for most Round Valley Indians urban labor was temporary. Ida Soares stated, "[My husband's health] went bad so we moved back to Covelo and that was in the

¹¹ George Snyder, "The Indian Wars Are Not Over," *Albion Monitor*, September 2, 1995, www.monitor.net/monitor/9-2-95/indianwars.html.

¹² Wayne Cox interview, *Voices and Dreams*, 77; Soares interview; Elizabeth Willits interview by Acklan Willits, 4/11/90, RVOHP.

year... '45 [or] '46 when we came back and I've been here ever since."¹³

Meanwhile, migrant labor slowly became less important in Indians' lives, and, perhaps, the years *following* World War II were more destructive than the Great Depression. A mechanical hop picker slowly pushed Indians out of the hop fields.¹⁴ At the same time, the *bracero* program introduced large numbers of Mexican workers to northern California, thus squeezing Indians out of the jobs they had occupied for nearly a century. Some Indians continued to work in migrant labor, but had to go further afield. DeAnna Barney recalled that she traveled to Oregon with her mother and uncle to work in agricultural labor.¹⁵

Still, job opportunities awaited Indians in Round Valley. After World War II, Armstead Want, Acie and Claude Hoaglen, and Francis Crabtree worked for the railroad.¹⁶ Ranchwork continued to provide a source of employment. Joe Russ, Sr. worked on ranches in the mountains of Round Valley after World War II.¹⁷ The most important economic occupation, though, was logging. In

¹³ Soares interview.

¹⁴ Barbara and Robert Anderson interview by author, June 19, 2002; *Dispatch Democrat*, August 18, 1939.

¹⁵ Informal conversation with DeAnna Barney.

¹⁶ Armstead Want, *Singing Feather*, 63; Acie Hoaglen, *Voices and Dreams*, 88; Claude Hoaglen interview by author, June 18, 2002; Francis Crabtree interview by author, March 22, 2002.

¹⁷ Joe Russ, Sr. interview by author, December 20, 2002.

the 1950s, the timber industry overtook migrant labor as the principal form of employment. Wayne Cox explained, "[the Indians] could make a living here in the valley without going through a migrant-type situation and make more money without leaving home."¹⁸ Armstead Want and many other Round Valley Indians flocked to the new mill that employed Indians.¹⁹

I hope my research makes us rethink Native American unemployment. While talking to Kathy Cook, a veteran of nearly fifty years of tribal politics, she said, "I hope you write something positive."²⁰ In December 2002, *Time* magazine published an article critical of Indian gaming, and it, of course, included a statistic that referenced the high unemployment rates on reservations.²¹ These are some of the negative representatives of Indian country that Cook references. However, this dissertation shows unemployment is a recent phenomenon in some parts of Indian country. While Indians may not have worked year-round, unemployment was not the problem. Marginal jobs and underemployment posed the difficulties. Native American unemployment is a product of economic and

¹⁸ Wayne Cox, *Voices and Dreams*, 76.

¹⁹ Armstead Want, *Singing Feather*, 63; Dorothy Ried, *Voices and Dreams*, 247.

²⁰ Katherine Cook Interview with author, March 19, 2002.

²¹ Donald L. Barlett and James B. Steele, "Who Gets the Money?" and "Wheel of Misfortune," *Time*, December 16, 2002, vol. 160, no. 25.

historical change in the United States, as the country moved from an agricultural nation to an industrial one. Maybe this is why Acie did not mind picking hops when he looked back on it from the perspective of the 1990s. After all, given the economic problems that accompanied the decline of logging in northern California that decade, it was a paying job.

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