

OLIVE OATMAN'S RETURN

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In 1851 a pioneer family named Oatman was traveling alone westward through southern Arizona when it was attacked by "Apache," actually Yuman Yavapai, sometimes called Mohave-Apache or Yuma-Apache. The parents were killed, two girls taken captive and before long sold to Mohave visitors. One of the sisters died, but the other, Olive, stayed with the Mohave, in Mohave valley, about four years, when the U. S. Government, through its army post at Ft. Yuma, claimed her and she was restored. A somewhat sensational book was published which would have had more permanent value if it had sought to record more of Olive's concrete remembrances instead of vague phrases meant to thrill.(1)

Aliūtman, as they called her, was well remembered by the Mohave in 1903, and they usually were first to mention her, expecting that this white captive would be what Americans were likely to find of most interest in Mohave history. Various old native men and women who had known Olive Oatman in their youth were pointed out to me, but most of them were disinclined to reminisce about her on the ground that it might be held against them as incriminating. Finally Tokwa@a, "Musk Melon," volunteered to tell what he knew about the episode, and on June 22 did so. A young man interpreted, whom I noted only as Jim, and who was quite likely some kind of kinsman. We sat down under a ramada by Tokwa@a's house, which stood a little north of the "Pump House" (Needles City water works), near the Colorado River. The following day Tokwa@a also told me a myth on the origin of war, which however did not progress far beyond the creation during the day I had available for recording it, but is being recorded for publication. Tokwa@a is also mentioned several times in a long reminiscence which I secured later in 1903, in San Francisco, from Jo Nelson, about fights of the Mohave with the whites and with other Indians. Tokwa@a was reckoned brave but was evidently not bellicose or intransigent.

This is Tokwa@a's account:

THE NARRATIVE

I was with the Yuma, visiting, when I heard news carried from the Mohave here to Yuma, that the Mohave had gone to bring two white girls. Then came another report: "Now they have brought them." So I heard it; and I thought: "Well, I will return; that is where I live." So I traveled north. When I got to Ahwe-ny-eva near Parker, I was told where the girls were being kept. My own

home then was on the east side, opposite and above here where we are sitting; but the main river then ran much to the east, where the cottonwoods are now; there was much more farmland on the California side then. It was on this side that the girls were living, close by here, only two or three hundred yards north.(2) At that time it was far from the (main) river; but later the site where they lived was washed away by it. So that is where they were kept.

Now I had got back to my home, and sometimes I would cross over and look at the girls as they lived with the Mohave here and got on well with them. The chief(3) said: "Let everyone help raise them! If they are sick, tend them! Treat them well!" So I saw and knew they were happy living here, for three, four, five years, perhaps more--I did not keep track of the time. Only once I was told that one of the sisters had died, nothing more.(4)

Then I heard that the army officers at Ft. Yuma were talking about the captive girl. The head officer's name was Kampinter (Carpenter).(5) Now some Yuma whom this officer had sent came, we heard, to where the railroad bridge is now, at the foot of the valley. And by sundown they had come up as far as some miles below my home on the other side, and slept there. The next day, the Yuma swam the river to this (California) side, I heard, so I crossed over too, and next morning went to the settlement where the girl was. There some of the Yuma (whom I knew) met me and said: "Is that you?" "Yes," I told them, and they invited me: "Come and eat with us," for they had been given food by the Mohave there. We ate and they told me they had been sent up by the army officers.

Then they went to talk with the Mohave head man who had charge of the girl. The leaders of the Yuma talked with him that night and tried to persuade him to give her up. He answered: "Well, I would like to raise this girl. We traveled far to buy her. We like her. And we want to make friends (through her). When those who come by us know how we treat her, they will treat us well too. If the officers want to see her, they had better come here and talk with me, and I will let them have her." But all the women there were sorry. "I like you much," they said to Olive.

They talked another night there. Then the Yuma said: "We might as well return; we cannot get her." I went with them. Four or five miles below here we swam across and went to a settlement where there was a head man and a whole company had gathered. "What luck did you have?" he asked the Yuma. "We talked about it, but he would not give her up." "What did you tell him?" "We told him what the army officers said, nothing more." The chief advised them: "I

would say to him, 'I will give you something for her,' because they did pay for her and they do like her.' And if you pay, you will surely get her." Then I heard the Yuma say among themselves: "Let us give him a horse."

So the next morning they went back up, to the same place, and I with them. The Yuma entered the house, and many Mohave too. But the Yuma did not speak (of their errand) and no one else did. I stayed there all night, because I wanted to hear what would be said, but no one said a word (about the matter).

In the morning I heard the Yuma speak. "A man called Carpenter sent us. You did not agree (to what he wants), but we have returned, because he will not let up. He will go on bothering you about it. The reason you did not agree is that we were not offering you anything; we know that. Well, we have a white horse downriver (at Yuma); we will give you that." Now there was another head man present, an old man, above everybody. So the Yuma asked him: "What do you say?" And he answered: "I am satisfied. That is why we kept her; we raised her so that if anyone wants her back, they can have her. If Carpenter wants me to give her to him, I will do so. Let's take her down and go to get the horse."

Next day we all started, going the same trail; we crossed the river, and went on down to where some houses were standing empty, still north of where the bridge is now. There we stopped to eat. At that time the Mohave were starving and had only wild seeds to live on; but they had given us a little of those to take along, and so we made mush there and ate.

Then the girl said to me: "You will always follow me?" "Yes." "I do not know the Yuma language, I only know Mohave. When we get there to the officers, you speak in my place; then you will go home again." I told her: "Yes, I will go with you. If you get sick, I will take care of you; if your feet are sore, I will carry you."

Then, that same day, we started again, and came where the bridge is now. Many Mohave were there to see the girl and the Yuma, and gave us a little food to carry on the way. One of them put some in my hand, and I tied it in a rag for the girl. We went on down, still on the Arizona side (over the ridge) into Chemehuevi Valley, at the lower end of which we crossed the river. A few miles farther were some empty Chemehuevi houses. There we slept.(6)

Next morning we started along the trail but wanted to go the straightest way, so crossed over the high Kwaskilye range.(7) The Yuma were fast travelers and got far ahead. The girl was not so good, and we led (supported) her. At Parker we crossed back to the Arizona side. The Yuma arrived there while the sun was

still up, the girl and I after it began to be dark. We slept without supper.(8)

In the morning we cooked a few beans and started south. We were worn out and traveled slowly till midafternoon when we approached a Mohave settlement. They saw us coming, recognized us, and began to cook. So we got a little to eat and stayed there the night. This place, like the one at Parker, is on the Indian Reservation now (1903).

In the morning we started, but crossed to the California side to shorten the way, and after a while we came to Akoi-humūōe-nahanyo, where there were houses at which some Yuma sometimes lived; it was not a home village of the Yuma.(9) There we slept.

Next morning,(10) we kept on the California side and in the afternoon got to Asakwatai,(11) where a band of Yuma were living. Then all the Yuma head men talked together, and we got enough to eat, and rested and slept there.

In the morning they fed us beans and pumpkins. Then we started, but the girl was giving out now. She walked slowly. And the Yuma said "This is the last settlement all the way down, except you will come to one more place of houses, to Ahpe-hwēlyu, (12) where they will have fish." We got there near sunset. The Yuma party there was living on fish, and that is what we got. They brought a big Colorado salmon; when I saw it, I was glad, and cooked it. We all sat down and fell to, the girl too. The fish was cooked soft, and we had a little wild seed with it: it made a good supper, and we talked, and the Yuma head men talked together and we slept.

When we got up, the head of the Yuma there said: "We have nothing to feed you. We would like to give you something but haven't any." We told them: "We are tired from walking; we would like to float downriver a while; have you anything for us?" "Yes, I have two bundles of tule (rushes);(13) take those." So we took those, and floated down for five or six miles, then landed (on the Arizona side). We found (14) seeds, carried them in a cloth, and when we stopped to camp we ground them and made mush, but half we made into a loaf to carry, because there would be no more houses or people until we reached Yuma. So we ate and slept.

In the morning(15) I said to the girl: "Take seed loaf to last you a day and a half, because it may be one or it may be two days before we arrive and there are no more houses on the way." Then we started. At Kuvukwīlye(16) we crossed(17) to the California side; this was the last crossing. We walked on to To'oske, an uninhabited place on a mesa (off the river) and slept there.(18)

Before daylight, the head man of the Yuma in our party said: "One of you young men carry my message to Carpenter, so they can make a calico dress for this girl and bring it up (from the fort) to my house, so that it will be waiting for her when we arrive." So the news went ahead to Yuma and was taken to Carpenter's house. All the Yuma knew and gathered. But the officers were not so quick about getting the dress ready, and we walked fast and arrived about nine in the morning, (19) and all the Yuma stood in a crowd. But Carpenter had sent food for us and we had a full meal.

About ten o'clock Carpenter arrived. He said nothing but took Olive by the hand, led her to the water, and she washed. Then she threw away her back skirt, (20) and put on the calico skirt. Then Carpenter said: "All come down to my house and we will have a big meeting." So everybody started, and the rest swam across the river, but the Yuma messengers and I and Olive and Carpenter crossed to Yuma in the boat.

Then they took her into the fort. There an old officer asked her about the bad happening (her parents' murder); (21) "How did it happen? Where did they catch you?" She told them: "I don't know. We were too young to remember, my sister and I. I think it was somewhere this side of Phoenix; from there they took us to the mountains. Then those Mohave Indians heard about us, came, took us away and kept us both. My sister died and I was alone, but they treated me well. There was not much to eat, but I helped them, and got used to it, and got along with them. They saved my life." Then the officer told her: "Your brother"--his age was about 25--"has inquired if you were dead or alive, and where. So I asked around and learned where you were and sent for you. Now I will notify your brother, and he will surely come and you will see him." All this I learned from the Yuma interpreter.

Then the Yuma who had made the trip north were all paid off, in food or other things. But they gave me nothing. Then the crowd of Yuma all scattered to their houses, and I went up with them.

I stayed two or three days, then went down to Haramsiv (22) and lived with some Yuma there. About a fortnight later they told me that her brother had arrived at the Fort with a train of wagons. I wanted to see him, but could not come close; I (23) was then working for a white man called Yaeger. But I saw them start, and as they came, I was close to the road. There was a long string of wagons; the girl rode behind. She got off to talk to me. I said: "You are going?" Then her brother picked up a club and started for me, but she said: "Don't! He is a nice man; he took good care of me." So he threw his club away and gave me a whole box of crackers. She said: "This is the last I shall see of you. I will tell all about the Mohave and how I lived with them. Good bye." We shook hands and I saw her go off.

Some questions were now asked TokwaOa:

How well did she speak Mohave? --She talked it well.

Where were her people murdered, and by whom? --It was at Aha-ka-tamoha, (24) west of Phoenix, southeast of here. They were Yavapai who did it.

How many Mohave went with her to Yuma? --I was the only one. No women and no other Mohave men came along. (The contrary is implied in paragraph 7.)

And the white horse? --The chief promised it did not get it. When he went for it to Yuma they gave him only some beads.

What did the Mohave call the girl? -- They called her Olive (Ali).--But a woman listening in said: "They called her Owitš." (25)

COMMENT

This reminiscence is certainly objective and detailed in its matter-of-factness. It touches no high points of feeling; indeed it is consistently unemotional--both as regards the narrator and the girl it concerns. Throughout it is fully oriented in time and space. It is an organized, orderly narrative. The compass is effective: it begins with his first hearing about the captive, it ends with her saying goodbye to him.

The facts that no other Mohave are mentioned on the long journey or at Yuma, and that when asked the informant denied he had Mohave companions, though he did--these facts indicate that his narrative has been somewhat warped by personalization. Nevertheless, this bit of egocentrism seems not to have detracted from the objectivity of the remainder of the narrative. And as late as 1903 the older Mohave were sensitive on the subject of their captive. Some feared incrimination in white eyes, and perhaps belated punishment. TokwaOa perhaps thought his helpful role would win him praise or special consideration. He certainly played it up.

As to psychology, it is evident how full of curiosity these tribes were, and how idle, or at least how ready to drop their work and congregate for anything that promised novelty of experience. They waited long -- perhaps all night -- without anything being said, then listened to talk most of the next day. And hunger did not diminish their curiosity.

One gets a sense of purposelessness of life, of not much direction. TokwaOa is hanging around among the Yuma when the story opens. Then he goes home -- "that is where I live" is

all the motivation. When the Yuma start downriver with Olive, he starts too -- why, he does not even discuss. It probably seemed the only natural thing to do. Later, in an account by another narrator, when the troops were in Mohave Valley and called for ten men to go back with them to Yuma, apparently as sort of hostages, though the Indians spoke of imprisonment, Tokwa@a volunteered, and was taken along. When the confinement became irksome, he and most of the others broke jail and ran home nearly two hundred miles.

Much the same holds for the Yuma who made the long trip and return for the fun of it, plus a bit of pay at the end in food and perhaps old clothes. The kohôta chief who gave up Olive made the trip to Yuma, or sent some one, to get the promised horse and received it, according to Stratton, or a few beads, says Tokwa@a. Futility wherever one turns -- long hard travels on lean rations and nothing practical to show for it, except some filling of the general emptiness of living. Even the fetching and keeping of captives seems to have been of a piece in motivation. The Mohave talk of building intertribal friendships thereby is something that they may have believed, but it was of course a rationalization: most captives were got in war raids.

However, the attitude toward these strangers was friendly, somewhat as toward a tamed pet. It involved even a bit of chivalry, as in Tokwa@a's assistance to Olive on the road; and the girls seem never to have been violated or molested.

Famines evidently recurred; they were taken in stride, as expectable events. There seem never to have been food reserves such as the Pueblos built up whenever they possibly could. With farmed food gone, one scattered and ate seeds or mesquite, according to season, or fished. Beans, pumpkins, seeds, and fish are mentioned in the present account as having been eaten; maize not once. At the time of the trip, there were Mohave as far down as below Parker, and Yuma up to within a day of them. The travelers were fed on arrival, if there was anything; in the morning there were only regrets. The campers might find or catch more that day; the travelers had to stretch their remaining handful, and trust to their next hosts not being empty. It was a hand-to-mouth manner of subsistence, but taken cheerfully.

ITINERARY OF ROUTE TO YUMA

Day 1. Needles to empty houses at lower end of Chemehuevi Valley; near 18, 19, 20 of Map 2 of A Mohave Epic, 1951.

Day 2. Across Kwaskilye range, (Whipple Mts.) to Parker; Mohaves there.

Day 3. To lower down on reservation, east side, Mohave settlement, near 35 of map 2.

Day 4. To Akoi-humūe-nahanyo, on west side, Yuma camp, empty; near 39 or 40 of map but opposite.

Day 5. To Asakwatai, west side, Yuma camped there. South of Ehrenberg.

Day 6. To Ahpe-hwēlyu, west side, Yuma fishing place. Ahpe-hwēlyeve is I of map 2, opposite 52.

Day 7. To uninhabited camp, east side. Perhaps Hanakwahave, 55 of map 2.

Day 8. To Kuvukwilye, K, and then To'oske, O, of map 2. In California.

Day 9. By mid-morning to Fort Yuma.

The air-line steps are: day 1, 28 miles; day 2, 23 miles; days 3-6, 55 miles, or 14 a day; days 7-8, 33 miles, or 16 to 17 a day; day 9 (by mid-morning!), 16 miles. Total 155 air-line miles, corresponding to perhaps 175 actually traversed, or a bit under 20 per day. The pace is stiffest at the beginning, slows down about the third day.

THE STRATTON ACCOUNT OF THE CAPTIVITY

In 1857 R. B. Stratton published in San Francisco and in 1859 in New York: "Captivity of the Oatman Girls." This little volume does not do justice to such possibilities as its theme would have developed if the handling had been straightforwardly and accurately factual. Stratton's book aims to be sensational but is imprecise, wordy, vague, emotional, and pious.

A revised abridgement by Charles H. Jones was published by the Oregon Teachers Monthly in Salem, Oregon, in 1909. It is to the latter that the page references refer in the account and discussion that follow; though I have also read the third or undated edition of 1859 which was issued in New York after the first and second editions of 11,000 copies printed in San Francisco had been quickly exhausted in California and Oregon.

Early in 1851, the Oatman family of nine, California-bound overland emigrants in a covered wagon, traveled in a company from "Tu Bac" (or Ta Bac) and Santa Cruz 80 miles to Tuscon. Here most of the train stayed, but the Oatmans and two other families pushed on 90 miles farther to "Pimole," that is, the Pima Indian settlements (p. 21), which they reached on February 16. The three families hesitated to proceed; but when Dr. I. L. LeConte arrived from Ft. Yuma without having been molested, the Oatmans, fearing they would starve if they stayed longer, decided to push on to California alone. So on March 11 they started "southward" (west) with two yokes of cows and one of oxen, all in poor condition. On the seventh day, Dr. LeConte, returning to Ft. Yuma, overtook them, with about 90 miles still to go. On the second day after, which I interpret to mean the evening of the next day, LeConte made camp 30 miles from where he had left the Oatmans. Here he was visited by twelve Indians, who ran off all his horses and mules. He sent his Mexican guide ahead to carry word to Ft. Yuma, and followed. The Indians who robbed him may or may not have been those who attacked the Oatmans; if the dates given are correct, they could have traveled twenty miles east after stealing the horses and met the Oatmans late next day. At any rate they were certainly Yavapai, and of the Western division of this nationality.

On March 18, 1851, the Oatman wagon and family made ten miles, and reached the Gila River, 80 miles from Yuma. With their cattle in poor shape, they had difficulty fording the river to the north side, and made camp on a small sand island. This seems to have been the night that LeConte was robbed farther downstream.

On March 19, they finally succeeded in completing the ford, struggled up on the first mesa, and rested their exhausted animals. Around four in the afternoon they decided to push on, ate, and had finished reloading, when the oldest son, Lorenzo, saw Indians coming. Reaching the wagon, the Indians begged food and were given bread; then suddenly they attacked. Six of the nine Oatmans were killed,

besides Lorenzo who was left for dead; Olive and her younger sister Mary Ann, aged about 7, were seized and carried off.

Lorenzo, recovering, made his way back to the "Pimole" Indians and was saved. A rescue party found the six bodies and buried them. The attack probably occurred not far from the later Agua Caliente, Mohave Aha-ku-pinye, which is about halfway between Gila Bend and Mohawk Mts. and 80 miles by air from Yuma.

Olive Oatman, who was about 15 — she is sometimes called "Miss Olive" — and was between Lorenzo, 14 and Lucy, about 17 — walked with her captors, but Mary Ann, soon giving out, was carried by one of them on his back. The second day an Oatman horse and two oxen were driven in, the oxen slaughtered, sliced up, and the meat carried along. On the third day they reached the Indian camp, "nearly 200 miles" from the scene of the massacre. This is fantastic exaggeration, of course. The camp was probably at a spot in or between the Herculvar and Harquahala mountains — Mohave Ahakuva and Ahakwahol(a). These places, near the present settlements of Salome, Wendon, and Golden, (26) have permanent water, and were the home or base camp of a band or subdivision of the Southwestern Yavapai. The area figures repeatedly in the Mohave Migration Epic. At any rate, their distance from the Gila near Agua Caliente is such that they could have been reached on the third day of foot travel.

The story says that there were 300 in the band, which can safely be cut to a half or a third or less; the area is very desert. Stratton also says that they were the broken-away part of a tribe, called Tonto (Toute, Touton) Apache by the rest (other Apache). This is an error. The Tonto were true Apache, but in eastern Arizona, and separated from the Tolkekepaya or Western Yavapai by the Southeastern Yavapai, as appears in Gifford's account. (27) Stratton's book is however substantially right in saying that the group did not (ordinarily) farm and ate chiefly deer, quail, rabbits, and some roots, along with worms, grasshoppers, and reptiles. (28)

The Mohave lived "300 miles northwest" (actually under 100 (29)) and were in the habit of visiting once a year, bringing farmed food. This would presumably be toward autumn. They did so come late in 1851. Another party of them arrived "nearly a year later" — i.e., later than the massacre; for it is said to have been about the beginning of March, 1852. There were five men in this second party, including chief Espaniole (or Espaniola), and his daughter Topeka, a girl not yet twenty, who spoke "Apache" (i.e. Yavapai). They came with one horse, but the girl walked. A trade was arranged for Olive and Mary Ann: the Mohave gave two horses (one of them promised?), a few vegetables (perhaps pumpkins or melon seeds), a few pounds of (glass) beads, and three blankets — a fair enough price, and evidencing the Mohave desire to possess the captives.

The trip back took eleven days. This must have been a reasonably comfortable pace, probably on account of the two girls. In the

Epio, the Mohave flee from the South end of Mohave Valley to Gila Bend — a considerably longer distance — with women, children, and agod, in eight days. (30) War parties returning from the Maricopa also traversed a greater distance in eight days. (31) At any rate, two hours before sunset on the eleventh day Olive and Mary Ann saw Mohave Valley before them, with the "clear and crystal waters" of the Colorado winding down it. Its water is actually completely turbid and deep red, but under the reflection of the brilliant desert sky it can shine beautifully blue from a distance. "At the north end" was a mountain — the famous Avikwame.

There was a little game in Mohave Valley, it is said, but fish were taken from "a small lake" (slough in flood time) near the settlement where Olive was taken. The Mohave were planting wheat in autumn, but corn and melons in spring (i.e., early summer, immediately after the June inundation). They, or the Yuma or Pima, may have learned about winter wheat from the Spaniards. They also used to go six or eight miles to gather a "seed or berry that grew upon a small tree; this was their staple." It was "hung up to dry," for the time when their "vegetable" (farmed foods) were exhausted. This is evidently mesquite, Prosopis, which was indeed a staple; although a subsequent reference (p. 85) to "musquite" as if it were something separate, is probably due only to sloppy writing. However, mesquite pods were not hung up, but were spread out to dry, and then stored in giant bird's-nest granaries of arrowweed, open-topped or covered.

In the spring (of 1853?), the grain was exhausted, the harvest failed, and there was famine (pp. 75, 79). This is not too clear. The fall-sown wheat ("grain") presumably did not come up, or at least did not ripen, in spring; and then, the June inundation not rising, the maize, pumpkins, melons, and beans gave no harvest. It was then that some Mohave went to gather Oth-to-toa "berries" from "Taneta" trees 60 miles distant. They reached the place on the third day, but the fruits were scarce; and six of them, with Olive, went 20 miles farther, and there found abundance. These are evidently ahtota, grape-like fruits growing on bushes in Chemohuvi country to the northwest or northnorthwest, which the Mohave describe as occasionally having recourse to in times of famine. But this party with Olive lost its way on returning at night, had no water, and became ill from the berries. In the morning three of them died; the others promptly burned their bodies. Next day, they rejoined the main party. Leaving the morning after, they returned to Mohave Valley the second evening.

In the second autumn, which would be that of 1853, the two sisters were given a bit of land and seed. They planted the wheat with their fingers in hillocks, but hid the corn and melon seeds away — to plant after the next flood, presumably. If the timing is stated correctly, this gift of seeds during famine evinces lively affection.

However, Mary Ann died before the famine was over. Stratton makes quite a sob story of it, what with pious conversations between the sisters. As Mary Ann lay dying, she sang hymns. This may have been rural and frontier practice in the mid-nineteenth century as death approached. However, the Mohave sang for their dying kin, or wailed if they were women without song cycles; and it is indeed stated that "the chief's wife" — "chief" I take to be kohôta-wailed the whole night while standing by Mary Ann. One may suspect that Mary Ann was stimulated by this to sing too; and if she sang hymns, perhaps it was that she had not learned any Mohave cycles. Previously, it is mentioned, the Mohave repeatedly asked Olive to sing — she favored hymns, of course — and then gave her beads and bits of flannel in recompense. As soon as Mary Ann died, the Mohave wanted to cremate her, but on Olive's remonstrances allowed her to bury her sister in her particular garden plot.

The chief's wife also secretly fed Olive out of her seed cache. Thus Olive got on until March-April 1854. It was now two years since her arrival among the Mohave, and she had been tattooed. An engraving of her in the 1859 edition shows three vertical lines from the lower lip down the chin, another from each corner of the mouth, and two (or three?) horizontal spurs or triangles out from these last. This spring, her wheat yielded her half a bushel. She also harvested (later in the summer) half a bushel of corn of her own. But her melons were destroyed by flocks of blackbirds.

The year 1854 proved a better one. The "mosquito" was abundant, and the overflow was good, so that farmed foods were also plentiful. The north half of the Valley invited the southern, where Olive lived, for a great feast.

In the spring of 1854 the tribe was also excited over an expedition against the "Cochopas", (Cocopa), "700 miles" distant (250 is nearer the fact). Sixty Mohave went on a war party; although the women generally were opposed. Now follows a statement that I cannot affirm or deny: Olive was to be "sacrificed" if any Mohave were killed. She was thus under suspense for the "five months" the expedition was away. Five months seems much too long. Five weeks should have sufficed, even if it took time to gather with the Yuma and then await opportunity for a surprise attack on the Cocopa. The word "sacrifice" also arouses suspicion. Further, why should a white girl be killed in "revenge" for losses inflicted by the Cocopa? It may be that kinsmen of a slain warrior were sometimes indiscriminating in their grief, and the "chief's wife" may have warned Olive of possible risk, or discussed hiding her if necessary. Or again, the episode may be just Stratton's imagining.

At any rate, Ohitia (32) arrived as messenger from the war party and announced that all were safe and five captives had been taken. Four of these were girls of 12 to 16, but one was a young woman of about 25, named Nowereha (33), who soon after tried to escape. After four days a Yuma messenger found her by the river — she had swum as

soon as she got away, and had hidden in the willows — and brought her back. The Mohave thereupon literally crucified her. She was fastened with wooden pegs through her palms and ankles to a cross that was set up, and was left for some hours. There is a woodcut of the scene. Then "poisonous darts" were hurled into her for two hours, then she died, and was then burned.

This account is probably inaccurate, but it is not made up of whole cloth. The Mohave attribute to the Northeastern Yavapai (34) a practice which the Yavapai admit (35); namely spread-eagling a man captive — stretching his arms and legs out — over a bed of coals. The Mohave named this Yavapai custom with the same word, *yaka'alya* (36), which they apply to their own victory celebration over a scalp. It is therefore possible that they possessed a similar custom, which they have seen fit not to impart to Americans. Or perhaps it was reserved for escapes. On the other hand, the set-up is suspicious, and driving pegs not only through feet and hands but into a cottonwood trunk or limb seems hardly possible. I do not think it would occur to a people of Mohave technology that anything could be "driven" into a log. Further, the Mohave had no "darts," and they are not known to have used poison on their un-tipped arrow shafts of *Pluchea sericea*.

In February of 1854 the War Department Railroad Survey reported on by Whipple, Ewbank, and Turner, and later privately by Möllhausen, traversed much of Mohave Valley, associating amicably and trading freely with the tribe, but there is no hint of any white girl captive. Perhaps she had been spirited and hidden away. But if so, could all knowledge have been kept from her, living as a Mohave, of a large party of whites being actually in the valley? And it is strange Stratton has no mention of a near-rescue having been frustrated by Mohave conspiracy and villainy. Was she perhaps at the time a more or less willing abettor in being concealed, but later, when with white people, was ashamed of this complaisance? Or again Stratton may have suppressed the fact of her knowledge, if she admitted it to him: it would have squarely contradicted the tenor of his book, whose keynote is Olive's misery among the degraded savages. (37)

On page 98 there is reference to sweating in blankets to cure sickness, or over steam from boiling water containing leaves. This record is of interest because the Mohave lacked any sweat-house.

In the summer of 1855, there were deaths from fever in the Valley. Two medicine-men lost patients, children of subchiefs, and fled and hid to escape revenge. But they were found within a few days, "arrested and burned alive." The burning alive makes one wonder. Would a fellow Mohave be treated as the Yavapai treated enemy aliens? Perhaps they were just killed, and then, like all corpses, cremated.

On page 203 of the 1859 edition there is mention of wheat, corn, pumpkins, and beans being boiled and mixed with ground-up "sorecoca" seeds or pumpkin seeds; on page 209, of cakes of ground wheat mixed with boiled pumpkins, up to two feet in diameter, being laid on hot sand, covered with leaves and more sand, and then having a fire built over them.

* * * * *

About the middle of February, 1856, Olive was grinding seeds by the door — one of the few touches of intimacy in the book — when she was told that a Yuma messenger, Francisco, was on the way to take her back to the Americans at Yuma. Francisco soon arrived, and a three days' council was held, but it was confused and divided. Finally Olive was refused him, and Francisco went off across the river. At noon he returned to the settlement where she lived: she was out gathering ottiloka roots. He had been urged, by those Mohave who feared American reprisals, to present the case again. All this gives a psychological picture much like Tokwa@a's, though the details differ. This time Olive was present at the meeting. She saw a letter that Francisco carried, dated at Fort Yuma January 27, 1856, and signed by Lieutenant Colonel Martin Burke. A violent discussion went on all night. After sunrise the Mohave agreed to release Olive. Apparently they started at once. With Francisco were his brother and two cousins.

What had happened was this. A carpenter, known as Carpintero — evidently for Spanish Carpintero — his name is given as Mr. "Grinoll" — had been working at Fort Yuma since 1853. As a civilian he could be friendly with the Yuma, and perhaps had learned more or less to speak Yuma. He kept inquiring about the missing Oatman girls, and in time got the essential facts as the Yuma had them from the Mohave with whom they constantly intervisited. The Commandant's letter shows that he took some official steps, but the carpenter, because of his personal connections with the Indians, seems to have remained chief instigator and go-between. It will be recalled that Tokwa@a thought he was the commanding officer.

When Francisco started north on February 8, 1856, he promised the carpenter to return in twenty days. On the twentieth day, which would be February 28, the Yuma reported to the carpenter that Francisco was coming in. Toward evening he saw three Indian men and "two bark skirt women" on the opposite (Arizona) side. The other girl was Olive's housemate Topeka. (38) It is not said that these five persons constituted the whole party; only that they were then seen. Tokwa@a mentions that some of the party went ahead, while he followed with Olive. However, he has them arrive before noon instead of before dark. Stratton says that they had been ten days on the way, though his "over 350 miles" traveled is about double the actual distance. Possibly the reason for the fairly stiff pace of nine days which Tokwa@a mentions is that Francisco had named the day on which he would be back. Topeka, as usual, was "kind" on the way. But of

course Tokwa@a, the young buck, is not mentioned, except by himself. After all, he was just a volunteer hanger-on.

Olive is reported as "unwilling to appear in her shabby bark dress," shabby evidently being Stratton's circumlocution for blouseless. So an officer's wife sends her a dress. Thereupon, Francisco, no doubt feeling very important, presents Olive to the Commandant, and there is great joy.

It now turns out that Francisco had promised the Mohave a horse as ransom, and that one reason Topeka, the chief's daughter, was present, was that she had gone along to receive it. Col. Burke furnished the horse, and his officers and men "made up the money" to buy another one for Francisco. Which in detail is not too clear but also not too important, and in spite of constant minor discrepancies gives an overall picture much like Tokwa@a's.

Lorenzo, who was 14 at the time of the massacre and therefore now 19, had made "efforts" of his own (Stratton loves this vague phrase) about his sister, and now learned from a Los Angeles newspaper that she had been freed. On March 10 he started from Monte to traverse the "250" miles to Fort Yuma, and arrived there, with a Mr. Low, in ten days.

Olive was taken by a cousin to the Rogue River Valley in Oregon, where she lived with Rev. S. P. Taylor. Later she was in Boston, in New York, in Albany at school, and at Little Falls, where she lived with the Strattons and occasionally lectured on the manners and customs of Indians. Her career in civilization, after the first flurry, sounds rather humble and quite second-rate. One wonders, did she ever think back with affection or even secret regret to her four years in Mohave Valley? The Mohave at any rate did not forget her.

FOOTNOTES

- (1) R.B. Stratton, *Captivity of the Oatman Girls*, 1857, San Francisco.
- (2) The name of the site was not asked for, unfortunately, and Tokwa@a had not yet got into the trained informant's habit of specifying places in Mohave nomenclature.
- (3) Perhaps a kohôta or festival chief who was keeping them. Cf. the kohôta who kept the Cocopa captive girls, *Handbook of Indians of California*, 745-747.
- (4) Nothing is discussed about a dead person. —It appears that she died during a famine.
- (5) He was not an officer at all but a civilian carpenter employed at the Army post. See below.
- (6) This was long day's march. From near Needles to the lower end of Chemshuevi valley must be at least 30 miles on foot, part of the way over rock.
- (7) This is the Whipple Mts. culminating in Monument Peak, 4110 feet high. See map 2 in *A Mohave Historical Epic*, University of California Anthropological Records, 11, no. 2, in press, 1951. They are cutting across an angle of the river flowing first SE and then SW.
- (8) Another good march—around 23 miles in air line, over the Whipple Mts.
- (9) This would be near 39 or 40 of map 2 as just cited, but on the other side of the river.
- (10) The fifth.
- (11) Not otherwise recorded, but evidently below Ehrenberg.
- (12) Ahpe-hwelyeve is I on the W side near Palo Verde on map 2. The usual Mohave route along here was on the E side.
- (13) For a rush balsa or raft.
- (14) It is not clear whether they discovered a cache of seeds stored there or whether they found someone in the party still carrying seeds.
- (15) The eighth day of the march.

- (16) This is K of map 2, near Picacho, and a customary crossing place to the W side, to cut off an E bend of the river.
- (17) Like all the others, apparently by swimming, the girl too.
- (18) This is O of map 2.
- (19) On the ninth day.
- (20) The Mohave "skirt" of black-willow inner bark was double, a front apron and a larger one behind. The interpreter may have meant the whole dress when he Englished "back skirt"; or the girl may have kept the front apron on for modesty until after she was covered by the calico dress.
- (21) "Bad news" the interpreter called it in habitual circumlocution of anything referring to death, especially in speaking to a kinsman of the deceased.
- (22) I cannot place Harams~~I~~, exactly.
- (23) My notes are not quite clear: it may have been Olive's brother that was working for or with Yaeger.
- (24) The Stratton account would put it near Agua Caliente, which the Mohave call Aha-ku-pinye, "warm water." I cannot place Tokwa~~Q~~'s Aha-ka-tamoha.
- (25) This suggests that the man or kohôta who kept her was of the clan who call their women Owit~~š~~, and that she was considered as of this clan.
- (26) See G4, G5, H5, I5 of map 2 of A Mohave Historical Epic.
- (27) Northeastern and Western Yavapai, UC-PLAE 34:247-354, 1936; see map at end.
- (28) This is correct, according to Gifford, except for reptiles. Also important in the diet were agave butts, sahuaro and opuntia cactus fruit, mesquite pods, and many seeds. Gifford has the Western Yavapai farm a little more than the Eastern divisions (p. 263).
- (29) It is about 85 miles airline by map from Salome to Topock at the foot of Mohave Valley.
- (30) The route is analyzed there -- see UC-AR, 11:2, 1951.
- (31) Same, Part 8.
- (32) I cannot make anything of this personal name.
- (33) I cannot identify "Nowereha" with any Cocopa clan's female name.

They do have Niu and Uru names, with totemic reference "deer" and "night-hawk."

- (34) Of the Prescott area. The Mohave reference is to an unpublished but prepared account of intertribal wars.
- (35) Gifford, as cited in note 27, p. 304; also, the same, The South-eastern Yavapai, same series, 29:177-252, 1932 (on p. 186).
- (36) Handbook, p. 752.
- (37) The Survey party reported no evidences of famine among the Mohave. In fact on February 23, 1854, just before reaching the Valley from the South, they traded six bushels of corn and three of beans from the Mohave, and on February 25, in the Valley, six bushels of corn and 200 pounds of wheat, besides which they were offered at least ten bushels of beans in sale and numbers of great pumpkins weighing up to 25 pounds. This was at a time well before the 1853-54 winter wheat crop could have been ripe (immature wheat crops were seen), and several months before the 1854 maize was even planted. The Mohave should accordingly have been at their most destitute and hungry moment from the crop failure of 1853. Stratton has evidently either been imprecise in his dating or has exaggerated the severity of the famine.
- (38) The names Topeka, and the chief's wife Aespaneo who mothered Olive, do not identify with any known Mohave name, clan or personal. Nor do the men Cearekae (Ccearekae) nor Adpa-darawa, nor the "Hippoweka" spirits on Avikwame. The Hiccocs are the Americans, Haiko or Hiko, correctly enough; and on pp. 177-178 the myth of white man leaving the place of creation to go off with cattle and wealth is outlined in a form that shows the Mohave were telling the episode then much as they did 50 years later.