

# ANTHROPOLOGICAL RECORDS

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BEAR RIVER ETHNOGRAPHY

BY

GLADYS AYER NOMLAND

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MANUFACTURED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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## INTRODUCTION

Stimulus received from the faculty of the Department of Anthropology of the University of California encouraged this attempt to collect whatever fragmentary material could be obtained from the fast disappearing Athabascan groups of northern California.

During the summer of 1928 diligent search for informants was rewarded by friendly contact made with representatives of the Sinkyone,<sup>1</sup> Nongatl,<sup>2</sup> Mattole,<sup>3</sup> and Bear River tribes.

The sole Mattole informant is only about 65 years old, but the extreme age and poor physical condition of the informants of the other three groups convinced me that work must be begun immediately if a record of their respective cultures was to be obtained. To that end the summers of 1928, 1929, 1930, and 1931 were divided into four working periods, each of which was given to one of these groups.

In 1929 my Sinkyone informant died at an advanced age. In 1931 one very old Nongatl informant died, and, since the accompanying paper has been prepared for publication, my Bear River informant has passed away (Dec. 22, 1935).

Whatever sketchiness is noticeable in the material got from the above-mentioned groups must be attributed to the fact that the cultures described have long since ceased to exist except in the rather hazy memories of the several informants. Physical disability and death has made the obtaining of data more difficult.

## TERRITORY AND VILLAGES

The most important part of the territory of the Bear River Indians is in the Bear River drainage of southwestern Humboldt county, California. The long, narrow valley lies, for the most part, on the northern side of the river and continues over the hills to the north as far as Fleeners creek, some miles south of the present town of Ferndale. At this point it adjoins the Wiyot southern boundary. The northeastern side of the valley continues up the slope of the Bear River mountains, extending back to the east as far as Monument, and including Mount Pierce. From here it runs southeasterly in a line about five miles south of Scotia, to the Van Duzen

river. It includes northern Bull creek and Rio Dell (Eagle Prairie) areas which here adjoin Nongatl and Lassik western boundaries. Beyond Rio Dell, the southeastern boundary extends from the confluence of Bull creek with the Eel river to the source of the North Fork of the Mattole river, where it meets the northern boundary of the Mattole area; thence westward, following the drainage of Davis creek, to the Pacific ocean.

The area as a whole is mountainous with narrow riverain valleys between the ranges. One continuous range extends the full length of central Bear River territory, where the highest peaks attain an altitude of more than 3500 feet. The mountains drop off sharply to the edge of the river on the northern side, but to the south slope more or less gradually into rough, rolling country, which extends through the southern boundary of the Bear River territory and on to the Mattole valley.

On the northern slopes the mountain ranges are heavily timbered, whereas the less precipitous southern exposures are covered with a rank growth of grass and smaller shrubs. There is no snowfall in the lower river drainage, but in severe winters there may be several inches in the higher mountains to the north and east (pl. 7a-d).

The annual rainfall of the area is very heavy, amounting to 120 inches a season in some localities. Fogs blow in from the ocean almost every night during the summer, and heavy ocean winds sweep up the valleys and over the highlands in both summer and winter.

The entire area is marked off from that of surrounding tribes with the greatest precision. Natural land configurations, such as mountain peaks, rocks, creeks, trees, canyons, springs, and so on, are used as boundary marks which are respected by the adjoining tribes.

All village sites have been plowed up and destroyed by white settlers. They were usually situated on the north bank of the river with a hinterland of narrow valley. All villages were named. The largest and most westerly one of the entire area, including the flat at the mouth of Bear river, was called Tc'alko', which means Bear River people. It was protected from the north and south by hills on both sides but open to the upper valley on the east and to the sea on the west. Chil-shěck was the next village above Tc'alko', situated on the site of the present town of Capetown. Chil-en-chě was the next village above Chil-shěck, near the present Morrison ranch. Sels-che'e-ch, a site now marked by a large red rock, was about three or four miles up the river from

<sup>1</sup>Gladys Ayer Nomland, Sinkyone Notes, UC-PAAE 36:149-178, 1935.

<sup>2</sup>Gladys Ayer Nomland, MS, unpublished.

<sup>3</sup>Gladys Ayer Nomland, MS, unpublished.

Chil-en-chē. Tlanko was also above Chil-shēck, and Esta-kana (now Gear's place) was on the largest flat in the upper valley above Tlanko. Seht-la was about seven miles upriver from Capetown, and was the next village above Esta-kana. The last one upriver, Me'ss-e-ah, was a natural amphitheater surrounded by large pines, and was important as the training place for shamans. No one lived within this amphitheater, but a few families lived in the grove surrounding it.

#### LINGUISTIC AND OTHER RELATIONS

Bear River dialect is distinct from, but closely related to, that of the other Athabascan dialects. It differs somewhat from Mattole and Sinkyone, on its southern and eastern borders, respectively, and from the other Athabascans of the Eel and Mad River drainage.

Pliny Earle Goddard<sup>4</sup> discussed the linguistic relations of these people as follows:

"The people who lived in these villages spoke a distinct dialect, differing somewhat from that of the Mattole, their neighbors to the south, and from that of the Athabascans on Eel river and its tributaries. There was, however, one village at the mouth of Van Duzen creek which was allied to Bear river both in its dialect and politically. Only a short distance away, just over the ridge of the Bear River mountains to the north, were the Wiyot, mentioned above, a people speaking a language wholly different.... In other respects, the Bear river dialect resembles the southern Athabascan group of California, which includes the Nongatl, Wailaki, Kato and Sinkyone. The lexical difference between this group and the Hupa is marked, and the agreement of Bear River is definitely with the south in this respect...."

Dr. Fang-Kuei Li<sup>5</sup> also discussed the Bear River dialect:

"The dialect is identical with Mattole in morphology, and probably in vocabulary, and differs only in a few phonetic respects. . . ."

However, my Bear River, Mattole, and Sinkyone informants insisted that, although many words were the same, all dialects were different. In spite of this, they said they were able to understand most of what was being said by any of the related tribes.

The Bear River people called themselves and the Mattole by the same name, Nī'ekeni', but they said that their own language extended only as far as Davis creek, their southern boundary, and Van Duzen and Mad rivers on their east. They called the Wiyot, Enā'chak; the Klamath Yurok, Ī'iwō;

the Crescent City and Smith River Tolowa, Sohtsona'wa. All, except the Yurok, affiliate linguistically with the Bear River.

In checking words given by Goddard<sup>6</sup> with my Bear River informant, Nora Coonskin, it developed that most of his information (gotten from Nora's uncle, Peter) was not in accordance with hers. Upon close questioning, the latter told me that her uncle preferred to speak Mattole. I checked Peter's words later with Isaac Duncan, my Mattole informant, and found this to be true.

The Bear River and Mattole were very friendly. They aided each other in wars against the Wiyot, a common enemy. The Bear River intermarried freely with the Mattole, Sinkyone, Nongatl; less freely with others. They were almost completely exterminated in their struggle with the whites, as were also the Mattole and the Sinkyone. Many were sent to the Smith River reservation, in northern California and southern Oregon, from where they escaped and gradually trickled back to their former habitat. Now all are dead except Mrs. Prince, who is so old that her memory is almost gone. Her niece, Nora Coonskin, my informant, has since died, aged 70 years. She was born at Bucksport, near Eureka, when her parents were making their way back from the Smith River reservation to the Bear River territory. She was reared on Bear river, near Morrison's ranch. Her information was handed down from her mother, who was a fullblood Bear River woman, and her father, who was half Bear River and half Mattole. Married to a Wiyot, she spoke both her own and the Wiyot languages. She had been separated from her own people so long that much of her information is vague and some things she has entirely forgotten, so that her account is, at best, fragmentary. She had adopted many Wiyot ways and could not always distinguish between Wiyot and Bear River usages. The customs of her daily life, learned by precept and personal experience, are clearly defined; she knew very little of male activities. Linguistic data are also fragmentary; because she had forgotten many words, information could not always be increased or checked by the aid of language. However, her shamanistic data are very detailed and complete because she had been practicing shamanism for five years prior to her death. As a child of 10 or 12 years she was trained for a shaman by her mother, also a shaman, but had not put her training to use. In the summer of 1929 she said that spirits came to her and told her she must doctor sick people. They also told her they would help her and give her power equal to that of her dead mother, but that if she refused to doctor she would soon die. Her feeling against becoming a shaman held her back from practice for some time, but the compulsion of the spirits and encouragement of her friends finally overcame her reluctance.

<sup>4</sup>The Bear River Dialect of Athabascan, UC-PAAB 24: 291-293, 1929.

<sup>5</sup>Mattole, An Athabaskan Language, p. 2. Univ. of Chicago, 1930.

<sup>6</sup>Op. cit., 313-323.

## RELIGION

Spirits, Souls, and Dreams

Every individual was thought to have a spirit, which, usually a short time before death, left the body and was taken toward the rising sun by other spirits. Shamans' spirits could return to earth and communicate with the living; only the malevolent spirits of common people ever returned. These latter might return to camp and hover about for a time, bringing catastrophe to their enemies, but by a special ceremonial shamanistic dance they could be sent away permanently. Malevolent spirits returned to earth not only in human guise, but also transformed into insects, such as flies, bugs, and so forth.

The spirit in human guise was thought to be not a shadow-like substance, but a small creature about 2 feet high - strictly human in appearance, dress, and actions. It could be seen by shamans during their trances, and by common people only when in a faint or coma. Spirits were believed to travel during sleep and fainting spells of individuals; they saw things hidden to conscious humans. Nora called all souls, ghosts, and spirits by the name of spirit, but contradicted herself when she gave the different Bear River words for each. She insisted, however, that the names were interchangeable. She said that the spirits talk to her in the Bear River language, and she even repeated some sentences which were enigmatic to her at that time. She said that she had forgotten much of her own language, and that she must think out the meaning of the message before she could understand the words and know what had been communicated to her. She also said that the spirits talked to her in unknown languages and she had then to repeat the communication to some member of that group for translation before she could understand it.

Deceased shamans' spirits were believed to go to a special afterworld. They went toward the east through three thicknesses of clouds: two thicknesses of white clouds and one of blue. Blue clouds always belonged to the shamans. Their spirits were accompanied to the afterworld by other shamans' spirits; never by those of common people. Slain people's spirits went to a different afterworld from those of the people who died a natural death. They went to the "blood home" or red clouds and were taken there by spirits of other slain people.

Shamans' spirits were said to travel during dreams, faints, and trances, and also during the training dance for new shamans and the curative dance for the sick. During its wanderings the spirit traveled over a high bridge toward the afterworld; any malevolent shaman's spirit might meet it there and push it off, because of jealousy of supernatural power. Only the most powerful shaman could resist having her spirit forced off the bridge; when her spirit returned to her body, she could then tell who had tried to push her off.

Such a shaman would then be considered so powerful that all others were afraid of her. If, however, the spirit was forced off the bridge, the shaman knew that she was doomed. Upon returning to consciousness, she would say, "I will not last long, I will die soon," but she might live for as long as four months.

During a long faint, the spirit was thought to be lost and unable to find its way back to the body. A shaman was then called in, who sang and danced. Her spirit searched out and grappled with the lost spirit and returned it to its body. Sometimes the lost spirit escaped the searching spirit and found its way to the afterworld by the aid of other friendly spirits. Then the person died.

"When my brother was killed, I was sick, but went to the burial. I fainted. Doctor said I was dead, but he sang and danced and brought my spirit back and I recovered. During the sickness and death of my mother, I saw a woman about 2 feet tall, who I knew was my mother's half-sister, come to earth again. She died when I was very young, but I recognized her with the help of other shamans' spirits. She was dressed in a blue cloud and wore feathers on her head. She spoke to me and said: 'You have trouble now, so I came to see you.' Then she walked into the brush. I looked around at other people to see if they had seen the spirit, but no one had seen or heard anything."

Nora accounted for her ability to see spirits which were invisible to other people by saying:

"I was trained for a doctor, so I could see. That sick half-sister of my mother was a powerful doctor, too, so she could come back. That woman never grew very large because she had too much power. That is her belt that you have<sup>7</sup> and it was my mother's before me. One time my mother's half-sister doctored with that belt and saved a man after he was dead. When she took out the pain, she jumped right into the fire and danced; scattered coals everywhere, and burned people. They thought she was crazy, but her feet weren't burned, so she must have been a powerful doctor. She had too much power, she died."

Nora also related another story, which illustrated her use of the word spirit:

"When my mother died she said, 'I must go away, my daughter, I must leave you now. Spirits came this morning and they are going to take me away. I'm not sick. Hold me up, my daughter. Be good to your children, teach them what is right, do right by everybody. There is a blue cloud on my chest which the spirits have put there, I suppose I'll have to wear that now. Now the spirits have put on two more blue clouds for me to wear. I'm going to a better place, so do not worry any more, my daughter. Doctors' spirits will wash the place from where I go, and thunder and lightning will come when I travel away. I have to go now.' Then my poor mother died there in my arms. And sure

<sup>7</sup>Specimen 1-27141 in the Museum of Anthropology, University of California; illustrated in plate 8b here.

enough, it rained and the thunder rolled when she traveled away."

Spirits returned-to-earth usually were seen only by the shaman. Sometimes a common person also saw them, but this was considered a very bad omen and indicated that he or some member of his family was doomed to die or that some catastrophe was coming to his people.

The afterworld was said to be in the clouds to the east, toward the rising sun. Shamans were the only ones who could see the place. Nora, being a shaman, was questioned about the appearance of the place, the activities carried on there, and so on, but she could not, or would not, give any information, except to say that it was a better place than the world and that she did not know how the spirits lived.

Dreams were believed to be the recollections of experiences which the freed spirit of the sleeper had encountered. When an event occurred, of which the sleeper had dreamed, he always said, "That is what I saw when I dreamed." Dreams of tan oak, fir, or pepperwood were believed to be a certain sign that the person was to become a shaman. Dreams of flying were a positive indication that the person was being tested by the spirits to see if he should become a shaman; they were considered an exceptionally good sign that such a person had great supernatural power. When a shaman became ecstatic during the dance, he saw things which were thought to be revelations of supernatural happenings communicated to his spirit for the benefit of mankind. They always came true. He could tell what he had seen, where he had been, and what was in the past and the future. Nora related her own experience during an ecstasy:

"I saw a big lake, where spirits told me I must go to get the best power. I have to go there twice to dance and sing and swim in that lake. That lake you call Clear lake. When I go there once more, spirits say that I am finished and I shall have great power. I can then doctor without singing and dancing. I can cure sick people by putting my hands on them or by spitting on my hands and rubbing the place where the pain is located. After I go once more, I can go any place and dance and sing whenever I want to. I cannot do anything more to gain power. My spirit travels and travels when I sleep, and when I dance and sing it tells me what I have to do and where I must go, and what is going to happen to me."

During the summer of 1930 in the Wiyot group into which Nora had married feeling ran high because of an unusual number of deaths from tuberculosis. Mutterings of malevolent persons within the group broke out into verbal accusations, because to Indians, death is never attributable to cause and effect, as in our own culture. Two persons were actually named by Nora as "devils." A schism in the group living at Lighthouse reservation and environs rapidly developed into open enmity. Friends and supporters of Nora, the only shaman, ranged themselves on her side, and ene-

mies on the opposite. Talk became bolder and more acrimonious until a rifle shot was finally fired at one of Nora's friends. Threats of killing Nora were made publicly and the law was appealed to by both natives and whites to put a stop to accusations and shaman dances and to jail Nora.

I was privileged to be included in a group of sixty natives of various tribal affiliations during a discussion on what could be done to curb the activities of the evil persons to whom was attributed responsibility for the deaths. The result of the discussion showed, beyond doubt, that the people had implicit faith in shamanism and supernatural power and that there was no intentional charlatanism or deception. Nora heatedly maintained that it was her duty to expose the guilty persons and declared that she would go to jail if the authorities wanted to put her there, but that she was right in revealing what the spirits communicated to her. Threats of assassination did not dismay her, because, she assured me, the spirits would reveal danger coming toward her and protect her against treachery.

Being called upon for an opinion, I advised not mentioning names of evildoers, as that was without the law, and also suggested that, since Nora was a very powerful doctor, she would be able to penetrate the evil intentions of such persons and so outwit them and protect the people. This advice Nora finally consented to abide by, but the people present were restive and wanted to know how then they were to protect themselves personally against sickness and death by evil machination when the perpetrator was unknown to them. When Nora volunteered her willingness, and vouched for her own ability to cope with such a situation, the high feeling diminished, but it did not completely subside for more than a year after.

#### Shamanism

Shamans played an important part in Bear River daily life, and in ceremonials they were paramount. They were considered superior beings because of their spiritual contact with supernatural powers and their supposedly great influence for good and evil. The benign shaman was venerated and loved, whereas one who was suspected of nefarious practices was hated and feared.

The first indications of supernatural power were excessive drooling of a sleeping child. Later, if that child experienced dreams of flying, it was considered an infallible sign that he had great latent supernatural ability. Such a child began to be trained at an early age, ten to twelve years, and especially at puberty. Shamans were usually women; men were thought to be less powerful.

Training of the initiate (a five-day affair) was under the supervision of an older, successful shaman. She appointed the time for the first ceremony, which must be held at Me'ss-e-ah, and which was attended by all the people. Members of the group sat in a circle around a central fire

of white fir boughs built in the middle of the amphitheater, but took no part in the ceremony except to assist the selected singers who officiated for the five nights of the dance. The sweat house was not used. The initiate stood at one side of the central space and the shaman occupied the position nearest the fire, beginning the ceremony by smoking the tubular pipe. She took a few puffs, laid the pipe aside, and danced around the fire with the initiate, supporting her in the dance as she became faint. At the onset of faintness, the initiate saw small white flies coming toward her and felt them fly into her throat. She became choked but continued dancing. If her supernatural powers were great enough she could remove the intrusive flies from her own throat by passing her hand in front of her face. If she had only limited power, the training shaman must remove the flies for her. This the shaman did by passing her hand over the initiate's throat, touching her tubular pipe to the throat, or placing one end of her doctoring belt against the initiate's chest and sucking the intrusive objects out at the other end. These small flies, invisible to the onlookers, never entered the throat of a person unless she had supernatural power. If the initiate did not experience faintness and choking during the dance, it was useless to continue training, because she would never have supernatural power. After the initiate had extracted the flies from her throat, she and the training shaman excreted quantities of stringy spittle. The novice used a small, new basket for the collection of the spittle. No significance was attached to the collected spittle during the training ceremony, but later on in curative dances it was carefully examined for intrusive objects in the shape of stones, flies, snakes, and so forth. The initiate fasted during the five-day period (although she could drink water); she also dreamed her songs during the fast. One song was usually favored as being the most potent and, unless the patient expressed a desire for another, was sung thereafter when the shaman was curing.

The same ceremony took place each night for five nights. Dancing began at dark and continued all night, the participants sleeping during the day. The training doctor ate everything except fatty foods during this period. At the completion of the ceremony a feast was supplied by the family and friends of the novice. Everybody ate and an element of festivity entered into the proceedings. Shortly after, the assemblage broke up.

During the dance the training shaman wore an ordinary buckskin dress with the hair on the outside, wrapped around the waist and extending only to the knees. She wore a headdress consisting of a buckskin headband to which was attached on each side braided buckskin with a large bunch of feathers, which hung in front of the shoulders (pl. 8a-c). Rattles, split sticks, or other instruments were not used. Male shamans wore a buckskin shirt girded around the loins by an elkhide

belt; they wore the same headdress as female shamans, only the feathers hung behind the shoulders. Only male shamans smoked the short, tubular pipe. The initiate wore a wide elkhide belt around the waist of her everyday buckskin dress.

After the initial training at Me'ss-e-ah, the novice could finish her training in another locality and be trained by another shaman. Commands received from the spirits at the first ceremony had to be carried out by the initiate. Some person must volunteer to cut her a staff (tuts) necessary in her further training and later in her practice of curing the sick. This staff was supposed to be the body of her first training doctor, whose spirit returned to the cane each time it was used and helped in curing. The volunteer was usually a person who thought he had latent supernatural power and would become a shaman. He "felt" the time and the place where the staff should be cut. Smith Brainard cut Nora's cane near Bull Creek.

Nora took her cane with her to Clear Lake during her novitiate. She held it in front of her as she walked toward the lake for her ceremonial swim before the dance. At the edge of the water she stuck it into the mud and addressed it: "You know what you are going to do. This is your wash basin. You were the first doctor. You are supposed to do all the work. You were the first one to cross water. You were the first to point to the sick. You were the first to cure the sick." The assistant then poured water over her head and back from a special basket. The water was rubbed downward from the top of the head to the feet in order to remove all bad influences; then a fresh supply was poured over her in order to "give her a fresh, new start." As soon as this purification bath was completed, the novitiate addressed the moon: "You are going to help me. You are going to look after me. I'm going to start curing now. If I don't do right, do not help me. If I do right, give me power to cure these sick people."

Next morning at sunup the ceremony and prayer were repeated.

Supernatural power might be augmented if the novitiate went to a large rock at Me'ss-e-ah or Rio Dell (Eagle Prairie; where many eagles fly) and obtained one of the shed feathers.

The novitiate, or shaman as she was now, was not supposed to expose her full supernatural powers for from two to five years, lest she be harmed by it. Shamans could not eat anything fat, even deermeat; they only ate fawn which was split and roasted over the fire so that all fat dripped off and was burned.

A regular shaman must go on any sick call, even though she knew that there would be no payment. If she refused and the patient died, she must pay heavy damages. The new shaman was accompanied by an old one for the first two or three times to assist her in event of need. If the patient paid immediately and in full, the older shaman took only a part of the money from the first cases, to

repay for the training of the new shaman; if the patient paid only a part of the fee, she took all the money, and continued to do so with each new case until she had been paid in full. Thereafter the new shaman went on cases alone and collected all the money.

Fees were from two hundred to three hundred dollars in Indian money (i.e., six to eight strings of dentalia; two or three boats; sometimes one or two red or black obsidians; rabbit-skin blankets, etc.).

A curing shaman danced and sang from sundown till ten or eleven o'clock; then slept. She doctored for two consecutive nights; she could not go over or under that time. Different songs were tried out for their potency. If a patient liked one song especially, it was sung repeatedly in the belief that it was the most powerful song for that individual patient; otherwise the shaman selected the song she judged the most effective. She might sing her own or anyone's song.

If the patient was cured, he paid more than the usual charge; if he died within two months after, the shaman was compelled to return the entire amount. In olden times Nora's mother received payment comparable to five dollars for the two nights' ceremony. That was considered good pay, although nowadays the average is ten dollars a night.

There were some shamans who could see pains in a patient but could not remove them. Such a one must call another more powerful doctor to extract them. The "seeing" doctor was called Isna'sta and was not paid as much as the extracting shaman. It is the idea of shamans that they must be paid a high price for their services because, having so much supernatural power, the spirits will soon come for them--they will die before they are able to enjoy the blessings of the money. The shaman was compelled by the spirits to practice her profession, otherwise she would die.

In olden days the shaman did not suck out the pain, but used only the elkhide belt, the pipe, and the laying on of hands for the extraction of pains. Nora's mother and her mother's half-sister, both powerful shamans, used this method. Nora's followers believed that that was the kind of power coming back to her. It was believed that this method of curing showed the shaman possessed greater power than one who must resort to sucking. This particular kind of power has not been given to any shaman since the old days of Nora's mother. She told me, "My mother and her step-sister could lay the belt on the ground 10 feet from the patient and hold the other end and bring the pain out without touching the sick person." Although it is now in the Museum of Anthropology at the University of California, Nora claims that she can use that particular belt for extracting pain, but, the tail of the belt must be hung down and the blunt end secured above for her to get power from it. She also asserts she is able when

in Eureka to extract pain from a patient in Mattole.

The basket used by the shaman for the collection of spittle during a curative dance was made by any of the patient's family or any friend. If the patient died, the basket could never again be used for anything. The shaman then could either give it away or keep it.

When pains were extracted the shaman saw them in the spittle as tiny blue or red flies. They would fly away only in the direction from which they came, so she held them in her hands and turned from point to point until the right direction was found. They then went back to the place from which they came. When the intrusive pain was caused by the conjuring of a malevolent person, it assumed the form of a ball of fire which, when sent away, traveled in a straight line to the house of the person who sent it. Nora said she had seen both the flies and the ball of fire and therefore believes this is true. The shaman was the only one who could see the flies, but others claimed to have seen the ball of fire traveling to its destination.

When a family called the shaman to doctor, there were many preliminaries to be attended to. Eels and fish must be caught by the patient's family or friends for the feast following the ceremony. The shaman was barred from having anything to do with these activities. People of the group must be informed so that a good attendance would be assured; singers must be obtained; a supernaturally powerful pipe must be procured for the shaman if another than her own was desired; assistants who possessed the necessary eagle feathers and angelica root must be pledged by the shaman; and lastly, all menstruating women must be warned to stay away, because it was thought they would be a harmful influence, and would cloud the throats of the shaman and singers.

A detailed description of the modern curative dance, which I was privileged to witness, follows:

The dance was held in a vacant house, where a heating stove had been installed and a bed for the sick boy, a tuberculosis patient about sixteen years old. He was so emaciated and weak he had to be carried in from the automobile and put into the bed. Chairs and benches were arranged around the room and two lanterns hung on the walls at opposite corners. The floor had been swept and dampened. A special chair was placed for the shaman facing east, with a rush mat in front.

The doctoring ceremony began about 8:30 p.m. The shaman first removed shoes and stockings and put on a cotton dress, then smoked an old tubular pipe about 6 inches long. This pipe had a ferrule of polished stone about 2 inches wide at the large end and a smooth wooden mouthpiece inset with diamond-shaped pieces of abalone shell. At each puff she exhaled with a hissing sound and called out in a loud voice, "Tsa!" ("sickness get away; go back from where you came"), looking upward and all around the room. The spectators kept silent.

She smoked five or six puffs and handed the pipe to an old woman assistant who sat on her right. The assistant held out the pipe in her right hand and began to recite, in a loud voice, a formula prayer,<sup>8</sup> calling upon the spirits to aid the shaman and give her power. Immediately after the prayer the shaman began to sing, very low, and the spectators accompanied with a second part of the song. She sang louder and louder, her assistant singing the same part with her, while the spectators sang the second part. As she sang louder and faster she reached behind her for her hazelwood staff,<sup>9</sup> which was about 5 feet long, and held it out from her with her right hand, using the floor as a pivot for one end and shaking it in a circular motion as she sang. As soon as the spiritual power became strong enough, she began dancing on the mat in front of her chair, holding out the staff in different directions with first her right and then her left hand, stamping in time to the music. Occasionally she stopped singing and let the assistant and spectators carry on, breaking in to sing at intervals. As she became more excited she handed the staff to a man sitting on her left and danced toward different parts of the room, sometimes singing, always facing east, holding up first one arm, then the other, and sometimes both. At this point, the assistant took out some live coals and put them on top of the stove; and burned angelica root upon this until its smoke penetrated all parts of the room. The shaman finally danced to one corner where some children were sleeping and got a little girl. Holding her in front by the two hands lifted above the child's head, she danced with her to the patient's bed and back and forth a few times. She then released the child, who went back to bed, and danced to the side of the room in front of the patient's bed, holding out her hands toward him. By this time she was so excited and exhausted that she was panting audibly and two men stood behind her ready to catch her when she fell. Suddenly she threw herself backward toward the floor, screaming piercingly. The men caught her and eased her to the floor. The singing stopped abruptly. Her hands grasped her throat and her legs and body contorted as if in an epileptic fit. The men held her to prevent injury, and finally partly lifted and dragged her to her chair as the paroxysm lessened. She half reclined, resting and moaning, then began to hiccough, cough, retch and vomit, holding her two hands in her mouth, until she extracted the pain which she believed she had received from the patient's body through her hands. She then stood up and held her two hands clasped together with the pain between the palms. As soon as she had regained her breath, she opened her hands cautiously and examined the pain, laughed a little, and started to sing and dance again in order to dis-

<sup>8</sup>This formula is always the same and precedes the singing and dancing of the shaman.

<sup>9</sup>Young pine also may be used where hazelwood is not available.

pose of the pain, which she sent away supposedly in the direction from which it came. The spectators sang with her until she sent the pain away; then everyone stopped singing, talked of everyday happenings, smoked, and jested. The shaman rested, smoked cigarettes, and talked.

The second part of the ceremony began with the reciting of the prayer by the assistant. The shaman sang a different song, danced as before. Instead of burning angelica root, the assistant stood in front of the shaman's chair and danced with two eagle feathers in her right hand. She sat down as the shaman began panting and started to extract the pain. The shaman received the pain from the patient so swiftly the second time, that she was knocked over flat on her back, the supporting men failing to catch her. She fell so hard she became unconscious, but revived after a cup of water was thrown in her face. She then began to moan and groan and contort with all the appearance of great suffering. The men dragged her to her chair, where she rested, moaning, and then, as before, coughed and vomited up the pain, stood up and began dancing and singing again, accompanied by the spectators.<sup>10</sup> After regaining her breath, she opened her hands and looked at the pain, laughed again, and got down on all fours and walked like a dog. She danced, on all fours, to the door, which was opened for her, and took the pain (dog) "outside, where it belonged" and sent it in the direction from which it came. She explained to me afterward that poison is made by cutting off the end of a dog's nose and putting it on the end of a stick or string and dangling it in front of the sleeping victim's nose or open mouth. Or it can be made by boiling the nose, and using the water to sprinkle on the ground where the victim steps on it, or breathes the evaporating liquid. The person administering the poison puts on a dog's skin and goes out among people at night to find his victims. He is counted as a "devil." The conception of a devil, however, is intrusive from the Wiyot; it was not familiar to the Bear River Indians in olden times.

The third pain was extracted by the same ceremony, except that instead of the burning of angelica or the assistant's dancing with the two eagle feathers, the shaman opened the stove, as she danced, and took out a handful of live coals, put them on top of the stove, and, with bare hands, used them to light her pipe, which she smoked while dancing. She again took the little girl and danced with her, taking the pain out of the patient through the child's hands.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>10</sup>Without doubt the physical and nervous strain of going into many shamanistic trances aggravated the heart condition from which Nora died.

<sup>11</sup>This little girl had been accused of pushing the Burt's little grandson off the pier and drowning him, four days before. By drawing the pain from the patient to her own body through the child, the shaman was proving that the little girl was innocent of the charge. She said that if the girl had been guilty she could not have drawn the pain through her.

The next two pains were extracted by repeating the ceremony with again some variation. The assistant shouted out the prayer, then the shaman sang a different song, and danced but failed to finish taking out the pain.<sup>12</sup> She went back to her chair, smoked the pipe, and began all over again with the same song, this time carrying the ceremony through to the end.

After the fifth pain was extracted, the regular shaman's treatment for the patient was finished and she sat down and smoked cigarettes while the assistant gave the last dance.

The assistant smoked the doctoring pipe and at each expulsion of smoke called out "Tsa!" and looked upward and around the room. She took out her two eagle feathers and held them in her right hand. With her left hand she threw a basket, about 8 inches in diameter, onto the floor in front of her feet. She began to sing, the spectators accompanying her; finally she got to her feet, picked up the basket and began to dance, waving the feathers and making a scooping and brushing motion with them and the basket, all the while singing and ejaculating "Tsa!" She danced all over the room--always facing east--into the corners, calling out "Tsa!" and at last danced to the door, opened for her, where she waved, brushed, and scooped with basket and feathers and sang for some time, crying "Tsa! Tsa!" Then the door was closed and everyone stopped singing. This dance was explained to me afterward as always being the finish of the curative ceremony; it is made to drive out all evil spirits that may be hovering around the room or house.

Everyone talked and smoked as soon as the assistant finished dancing, and although it was 1:30 a.m. and raining, the shaman went to the river and swam. After she returned everyone went to the patient's parents' house, where boiled eels, fish, eggs, bread, coffee, etc., were served. The assemblage broke up at 2:30 a.m. (The patient died five weeks later.)

After the death of a patient there must be a purification ceremony of songs and dances for two nights before the shaman could again doctor, else it was believed she would lose all following cases because of contamination. The purification dance is exactly the same as the curative dance, except that the power received from the spirits in this dance is thought to be the force that knocked the shaman into a trance, whereas the pains that the shaman extracted from the patient in the curative dance were considered to be the force there.

A feast after the dance is compulsory, and must be provided by someone outside the shaman's family. It is in the nature of a free-will offering to the shaman so that she will be purified and continue her efforts in behalf of the members of the tribe. She will not doctor until after

<sup>12</sup>The shaman said she was "looking the pain over" before extracting it.

this feast has taken place, although she is prohibited from suggesting who give the feast, lest the whole ceremony prove futile.

Dancing and singing by the shamans is also a constant feature when there is sickness in other tribes. The regular curative dance is made for disease prevention, just as in event of intrusive sickness in the individual.

### Familiar Spirits

The sun, the moon, the clouds, white rattlesnakes, and a white, woolly, coyote-shaped animal, were Nora's familiar spirits. The sun followed her around, gave her power in curing and prophesying, and told her everything that was going to happen and that people said. When an enemy waited on the trail to kill her, the sun overpowered him and caused him to sleep. The moon was her guardian spirit at night; it caused an enemy waiting on the trail to kill her to faint. The clouds (which are the shaman's dress, especially the blue clouds which belong to the shaman), the white rattlesnake and the white, woolly, coyote-shaped animal told events about to happen.

On a moonless night the shaman builds a fire, and the shadows from it are considered as efficacious in seeing enemies and coming events as the shadow cast by the moonlight. Thunder, clouds, and lightning belong to shamans; the thunder rolls and the lightning flashes when doctors' spirits talk or travel in the sky home.

The sun is believed to be a man, the moon a woman; clouds are the dress of doctor spirits, and lightning makes their fires. The sun has only one eye, which closes during an eclipse.

### CRISES OF LIFE

#### Puberty Customs

Girls' adolescence ceremonies were well developed and have many characteristics of the central California type. Puberty was of importance and interest to the group and all took part in the ceremonies instituted for the future well-being of the girl. At the appearance of the first menses the girl was designated by a special name (Tsnu'ltung). She was sent into the house to sit in some far corner of the general living room with her hair pulled over her face. She could not look around, upward, nor into the distance for five days. Members of the group were notified, and came each night for five nights to dance and sing. There were song leaders, and special songs were sung for the commencement of the ceremony. The first night's song was called kanta'ktcneltn, "yesterday brought me back," the significance of which was not known to my informant. After the first night other songs could be sung, with special ones for dancing. On the third night a special song was sung for the dance in the house; on the fourth or

last night another special song, always the same, was sung as the girl and all of the accompanying women danced toward the river for the final bath. Swimming each night and morning was obligatory. During the dances the girl was supported by an older woman, who sometimes rocked her. There was a five-day complete abstention from food and water, after which food could be taken in small quantities but only enough water should be drunk to wet the mouth until the end of the tenth day. For this purpose there was a special, small basket, afterward kept as a cherished possession. She was not allowed to eat deermeat for a period of five years, nor fish for from two to three years. Usually this prohibition was broken after the first year or two, but such a practice was against prescribed usage and dire catastrophes were predicted for the offender. Obedient girls who wished for robust health observed the entire period of fasting.

During the first five-day fast the girl covered her face with her unbound hair. Another person, usually an old woman, combed it for her. A carved scratcher was used for the head and entire body during the fast. It was made from ironwood (?) and tied to the girl's wrist, so that it would not be misplaced or its use neglected. They believe that a girl would have sores or become blind if she used her fingernails for scratching. After a thirty-day prohibition against looking into the sky, a strip of mink or wildcat skin was twisted into a stiff ring and worn around the head to hold the hair in place. This was worn only by women of marriageable age. One year after the first menstrual ceremony there was a second ceremony, exactly like the first, after which the girl was called Ci'ci. She could then remove the twisted hide ring and wear a basketry hat as a sign of adult status.

For a year after the first ceremony the girl could not look piercingly at anyone or into the distance, otherwise she would have poor sight or might become entirely blind; nor could she show her teeth, laugh, or make any loud noise. Menstruating girls were forbidden to go near water because it was thought the water would become rough, imperiling fishing and hunting boats.

Formerly menstruating girls were taken to the prairie near the present Rio Dell for their training. Later the place of training was moved farther downriver to Me'ss-e-ah, because the former place was ruined through the disobedience of a girl during her first menstrual period.

They say that in old times Rio Dell was like the ocean. A whale came up there, and a menstruating girl looked at it. The whale turned into a rock, and the people turned into trees which hang their heads and droop (all except the girl, her mother, grandmother, and grandfather). That place was called Eagle Prairie. That is why it is no longer used for girls' dances.

This indicates that adolescent ceremonies and shaman-training ceremonies were formerly held at

the same place. Later adolescent ceremonies were held in the parents' dwelling.

Reasons for the fasts and taboos were told to the girl at the beginning of the ceremony. The maternal uncle was usually selected for this office, but when not available any other man or woman who knew the stories could instruct her. The girl was told not to eat deermeat "because deer go to many bad places, rocks, waters; they eat bad grasses which harm young girls, especially at this time." If a girl should eat deermeat she was believed to contract "deer spells," a sickness which caused her to act like a deer, snorting, rolling the eyes, and jumping around. The instructors always told the following story to the girl:

"Wolf chased deer into the ocean. Deer swam out of his reach. Wolf could not swim but when Deer returned to land, Wolf killed him. People took Deer away from Wolf and cut it up and suspended it in baskets from the house poles. In the night that [menstruating] girl got up and ate all the fat meat. In the morning the people accused her, but she did not answer. Later they found where she had vomited the fat over the ground. People immediately sent for her grandfather, who was a powerful doctor, but he could do nothing. He said that the next day she would walk away like a deer and die. Sure enough it came true; she walked away the next day, and was never seen again."

The informant explained that the people tried to do right by the girl, but she would not believe in their teachings. They pulled her hair over her face, but she threw it back and looked around. Finally she ate the deermeat and paid the penalty for her unbelief. "That is why girls do not eat venison while menstruating, nor women at any time of life during their menstrual periods."

Adolescent girls were not allowed to eat eels because it was believed that:

"A woman, like Eve, split an eel lengthwise. She threw one half into the water and the other half on land. The part thrown into the water became an eel, and the part thrown on land became a snake. Girls cannot eat salmon because the layer of fat under the skin looks like clouds; also because salmon go to bad waters, rocks, etc. For a girl to look at cirrus clouds and sand ripples is the same as to eat fish and eel fat: it is very bad for her and clouds the throat when she wants to sing, even though she does not 'get sick and act just like salmon and eels before they die'."

Nora related the following to illustrate the effect of breaking this taboo:

"Hazel lives at Lighthouse now. She has deer spells. She has fits. She twists and puts her hands with the fingers together so they look like deer hoofs: her tongue hangs out; she froths at the mouth; she snorts like a deer; and her eyes roll and get big. She is terrible looking [epileptic]."

Any man who knew the stories for the adolescent girl's instruction could cook for her, but it was

usually her maternal uncle who cooked salmon, fish, and deer for breaking her fast at the end of the long taboo. Five small pieces of the fish or meat were cooked in a new basket and given to her. She must eat very slowly, but after the first meal could eat all she wanted. Men always cooked fresh meat and fish because women were allowed to handle or cook only dried game.

There was no puberty ceremony for boys, nor was circumcision practiced.

#### Marriage and Divorce

Monogamy was the accepted rule, but polygyny, although prohibited to all but chiefs, was known. It was, however, frowned upon, and the offspring of such a union were considered illegitimate.

Marriages were arranged by a go-between. A man or his parents sent some old man or woman friend to the girl's parents with presents of skins, boats, dried deermeat, tarweed, money, and so on. If these were considered sufficient, they were accepted tentatively and the girl consulted. She was not forced into marriage with a man she disliked. If she refused the suitor, the parents returned the presents, and negotiations were definitely off. Otherwise the ceremony was carried through. If the suitor's gifts were considered insufficient he offered more until acceptable. After the formal acceptance of the presents, word was sent out to the members of the family and friends. All responded by bringing presents for the couple to the girl's parents' house. A feast partaken by everyone present, was given by the girl's parents. It was followed by dancing and singing. The next day the girl's father, mother, and brothers escorted her to the bridegroom's house, or, if he were too poor to establish a home at once, to the house of his parents. The girl's relatives remained there with her for five nights, during which she was not allowed to have marital relations with her husband. Then they returned home and the couple could assume marriage relations. The parents of both the bride and the groom helped them build their house, and also donated baskets, utensils, and blankets.

A larger payment was made for a girl whose mother had commanded a large bride price. If, besides, the girl was industrious, modest, and a virgin, she was regarded as eminently desirable, and her parents could demand a large amount for her. Widows and divorced women were less desirable than virgins, therefore the bride price was smaller. Nora told me that the bride price given by her second husband included four strings of Indian money, fifty dollars in cash, twelve fathoms of olivella string, one breech-loading shotgun; after the first child was born, four hundred dollars was paid. She did not know how much was paid by her first husband. I believe the large bride price to be an exaggeration on Nora's part, in order to show that she was held in great esteem.

Girls usually married four or five years after puberty. But sometimes when a man was unable to pay a debt, he gave his daughter to the debtor's son as payment. In such a marriage agreement, the mother of the destined bridegroom reared the girl until after puberty and one or two years afterward married her to the son without the usual gifts or ceremony. The first child of the union of a man and a "debt girl" was said to be "born of the blood," "somebody great," and bore a very high name.

A widow had to marry the oldest living unmarried brother. If she had children, she might repay the bride price, and she could then choose any other mate not barred by kinship rules. When a wife died her parents had to supply another wife for the man or repay the bride price if there were no children. No repayment was made if she had borne children. Parents-in-law could also supply the widower with a younger sister or close female relative of the deceased wife, in which event there was no repayment of the bride price. On the other hand some additional presents had to be given to the parents for the new wife, especially if she was not a widow or divorced. It was not compulsory for the man to marry a younger member of the wife's family. However, if he did not do so, the bride price was not refunded, but he was at liberty to marry another woman.

A divorced woman took all children until they were large enough for the man to rear. Then, if she was at fault, the husband could claim one or two or all. If the man was at fault she retained them without returning the bride price; if he had paid a large bride price he might force the return of some of the children in lieu of repayment.

A woman might leave her husband for mistreatment, lack of support, or for injuring or killing her brother or male cousins. In such an event, she took all the children as her right and did not repay the bride price. If the man wanted to regain the woman after having injured her relatives, he must again make payment for her, and this second payment must be larger than the first. If the injured relative was a male cousin or brother, she did not return under any circumstances. Any child born after such a second payment of the bride price was also said to be "born of the blood" like the first child of the union of a man and a "debt girl."

Maltreatment of wives was rigidly prohibited in the Bear River area in contradistinction to the Wiyot, where for real or suspected infidelity a man might whip or even kill his wife without fear of reprisal from her family. Among the Bear River a mistreated wife could return to her parents and be upheld in the separation. If the mistreatment reached serious proportions, the woman's father and brothers might kill the offending husband without reprisal from his family. If, however, the mistreatment followed upon the discovery of infidelity, the husband was permitted to beat both culprits, but he was not justified in divorc-

ing the woman or killing her paramour. If the husband allowed the unfaithful woman to go without manual punishment and she returned to her parents, they were compelled to refund the bride price, otherwise the husband could demand custody of the children.

Parents of the couple made occasional visits, none of which was obligatory or ceremonial in character. They might make gifts of food, which were returned in kind.

Rape of a girl, or intercourse with an unmarried woman with her consent, must be paid for very heavily, otherwise the father and brothers of the girl had a right to kill the guilty man. If a man raped a married woman, the husband, father, and brothers banded together and killed him without reprisal from his family. This penalty was always carried out for such an offense.

Parents-in-law taboos were not marked, but there was some suggestion of them. Although a son-in-law might talk with his mother-in-law, he was expected not to joke with or ridicule her. Similarly a mother-in-law spoke to her son-in-law only as she entered his house and not again until she took her departure. A woman and her father-in-law exhibited the same restraint as between a man and his mother-in-law.

Illegitimate children were reared by the mother and her family, but they were considered a great disgrace and were said "to put the family down to the ground," as was true of incest.

Incest was held in horror and was guarded against by brother-sister training and taboo, and by every other device at the mother's command. If a mother of several girls died, her parents always sent some member of the family to stay with the husband and brothers to prevent incestuous relations between them and the girls. A man who committed incest was called "dog." In spite of the constant care exercised, incest occurred. In this connection Nora told the following:

"A man living in another place had a nice looking sister. Many men wanted to buy her because she was nice looking and could cook and make baskets, but the brother said he would not take money for her. He was living with that sister but no one knew that. By and by she had a baby. This put her family down to the ground because everybody knew that the child belonged to her brother. No one would buy her after that. It gave the family a very bad name."

Each parent had a share in the training of children. A boy's father or uncle and the shaman instructed him in hunting and fishing, religious practices, and so on; the mother trained her daughter for household tasks and crafts such as basketry, and so forth.

#### Pregnancy and Birth

During the first months of pregnancy the woman ate panther meat and rats to make the child quick

and a good climber. However, rats were believed to make the baby cross and fretful at night and were eaten only when panther meat was not obtainable. Quail were eaten to make the baby a good walker. A pregnant woman must not look at anything like crossed sticks, nor at the cloudy appearing fat which lies under the skin of the salmon, nor at the ripples of sand, which were said to resemble the salmon fat, nor at small cirrus clouds, otherwise the baby would be crooked or cross-eyed. She was expected to work and lift up to the time of confinement. She ate everything as usual, only in smaller quantities, so that the baby would not be too fat, thus making delivery hard and prolonged.

A man did not observe any food taboos during his wife's pregnancy or childbirth, but after the birth he bathed in the river before entering the house.

A pregnant woman was not allowed to go near water because she was thought to make the water rough causing boats to capsize. No preference was expressed for the sex of a child, girls being as welcome as boys. Twins, which were very rare, were not liked, although they were not considered a misfortune if of the same sex; if of opposite sex they were believed to become incestuous in later life, and, although tolerated, were not welcome. They were carefully guarded against incest.

Before the birth the woman prepared four or five spotted fawn-skins in which to wrap the baby, a rush mat like that used by shamans in dancing, and a first cradle. As the time of birth drew near she carried a small flint knife tied around her waist with a buckskin thong whenever she went into the fields alone. If the baby should be born while the woman was away from camp, she attended to the cutting of the navel cord herself and buried the placenta before making her way to camp for further care. Usually she did not go far from home as the time of parturition drew near. She was then cared for by experienced women who were selected to assist her.

At the time of birth the assistant placed the prepared mat on the floor of the house and laid a block of wood about 6 inches wide and a foot long at one edge of the mat. The parturient woman squatted over the mat with the block of wood under the end of the spine, while two attendants stood behind holding her by the under arms. The midwife sat in front and held her knees. Two attendants alternately lifted her and rubbed downward over the abdomen with great pressure to aid in the expulsion of the child. If the labor was long and hard, the midwife made a digital examination to determine dilatation of the cervix, and slipped the cord over the child's head if necessary. If breech presentation was causing long labor, the attendants turned the woman upside down, held her by the knees, and shook her gently in order to turn the child, after which the pressure was again applied to the abdomen. In extreme cases, where birth was delayed for some days, the midwife cut the perineum with a sharp flint. However, this procedure was rare, and

Nora said that she knew of only two cases where it had been necessary to resort to such an operation.

The child was expelled onto the prepared mat, and the midwife grasped the umbilical cord between her fingers, close to the child's body, and pressed it firmly for a moment before cutting it with a sharp flint knife. The cord was cut about 2 inches from the body and the end was immediately tied with grass string. The other end was handed to one of the attendants who held it securely until manipulation for the expulsion of the placenta had accomplished its purpose. Downward squeezing of the abdomen was employed to expel the placenta after an infusion of golden seal had been swallowed by the patient. Golden seal was said to cause expulsion without manual manipulation. In cases of stubborn expulsion, the midwife inserted the hand into the vagina and pulled it loose by a close grip on the umbilical cord. Steamed moss and yarrow were used as compresses for pain after birth. The placenta was buried deep in hard ground at some distance from the house so that no animal could dig it out and eat it. Such a catastrophe was thought to cause the death of the newborn child. The midwife washed the baby and wrapped it in the spotted fawnskin, fur side to the body, and put it in the cradle.

The mother lay down for five days, drank hot water night and morning so that the abdomen would decrease in size and thus avert sickness. She did no work for twenty days or until hemorrhage ceased. The husband cared for her during this time. She washed herself night and morning with hot water. She could not eat deermeat for thirty days nor fish and eels for five to ten days, but could eat a small portion of acorn mush or other light vegetable food. After the five-day fast the husband, male cousin, or paternal uncle cooked fish for the patient and put it into a new basket. She was allowed to eat all she wanted, but she must eat by herself in order not to contaminate the remainder of the family. After thirty days a small portion of deermeat was cooked for her by the same person, and she could then eat anything. A head scratcher must be used for thirty days lest the mother and child suffer from sores on the head and body.

The infant was not fed for three or four days, or until the milk came into the mother's breasts. If this period was too prolonged, a nursing woman was hired to suckle the baby. For the service the wet nurse was paid an Indian dress, a basket hat, a rabbitskin blanket, or some other article according to the length of time she nursed the baby.

The infant was washed by the midwife in the morning and wrapped in a spotted fawnskin. Moss and soft spruce ends were used for diapers; these must be thrown away and allowed to rot; they could not be burned without harm to the baby. The fawnskins were washed and kept clean. They were used only for the five-day period of the mother's

lying-in. Then wildcat skins were used, the fawnskins being given away to friends. It was believed that if the fawnskins were used after the five days, or were used for covering the second child of the same mother, they could cause immediate death to the infant. Other people could use them without harm to their children, so they were exchanged within the family and with friends.

The baby was suckled whenever it awakened. The period of nursing continued for about a year or until the child walked. They gave some food, such as acorn mush and dried mashed clams for the child to suck on, as soon as the teeth erupted. A teether of ground abalone shell with a hole in one end was tied around the baby's wrist. Its use was thought to make the teeth strong and good.

The first cradle was used only for the first five days, or during the period that the child was wrapped in fawnskins. When the fawnskins were changed to wildcat skins, the cradle was simultaneously changed to a larger one which would accommodate the child until it was able to walk. The first cradle was kept for the next child or given to a friend.

The end of the umbilicus, which sloughed from the body, was rolled up and put in the cradle for safe keeping and as a preventative against disease.

Midwifery was taught a woman by her mother. It was more or less an hereditary office. These trained women were called upon to officiate in all births in the group. Other women did not know birth practices and men were not allowed to know about them or to be present during parturition. Women thought it was highly improper for men to know too much about childbirth. However, there seems to have been some teaching of boys in these practices and in the care of the mother, because the husband was obliged to aid his wife when the family lived at too great distance to obtain female help.

Men were very much afraid of newborn children and would not touch them. Nora said her first baby was born so quickly that she could not get to her bed and the baby rolled under the stove. She tried make her husband get it for her but he was afraid to pick it up, and went outside and called in her father, who reached under the stove and rescued the infant. Nora herself cut the umbilical cord, and with the help of her father, washed and dressed the baby. Her father wrapped it in a skin and put it in the cradle, then buried the afterbirth.

Barrenness in women was rare, but when childless women wanted children they went to certain places in the river, in pools or on rocks, and bathed and drank to assure themselves of pregnancy. There were no prayers nor amulets for promoting fertility. Contraception and abortion were not practiced. Nora said she never heard of such a thing until after the whites came and then "people did all sorts of queer things that they learned from the whites."

Names were given soon after birth and were usually those of some deceased relative or particular place or phenomenon.

### Death and Burial

Death from accident, violence, or disease was believed to result from broken taboos or malevolent magic. Only those who did not live good lives met such fate.

Malevolent persons were supposed to insert intrusive objects, such as stones, snakes, flies, and so on, into the body of an enemy by magical methods. My informant said there was a woman who did something evil with little, smooth stones. She had several of these which she kept in a bag with a shaman's pipe and some eagle feathers. When she wanted to make a person die, she took the stones out and did something with them. Nora did not know what, but she said she did know that the old lady spoke the name of the person she wished to kill, while she manipulated the stones in a secret manner. Only the shaman could remove intrusive material from the body of the patient.

When death occurred, the family immediately set up a shrill wailing, and relatives and friends hurried to their assistance. Friends first cut the hair of all the relatives, while some old man or woman immediately began to prepare the body for burial. The corpse was carefully washed with an infusion of nettle leaves and soaproot in order to prevent contamination to the living. It was then wrapped in a rabbit- or deerskin blanket and allowed to remain in the house until the next day. During the time the body was being prepared, the family, except the children who were not allowed near a dead body, sat around the corpse and wailed; distant relatives of friends moved necessities for daily living outside, and after the body was buried the mourners camped there for a day or two.

Burial was compulsory. The day after death a grave was prepared by a certain old man who knew the exact procedure. The gravedigger must face east while digging; he must climb out backward with his face toward the east; and he must not make the grave deeper or shallower than the distance from the feet of the deceased to the first ribs. Redwood boards hewn to size were lowered into the pit for the bottom of the coffin, and two ends and two side boards inserted back of the edges of the bottom board to keep them upright. The boards, or coffin, were not fastened together.

As soon as the grave was ready the body was carried from the house. The helpers of the person who prepared the body for burial carried it to the cemetery some distance from the village. There it was lowered into the grave with thongs of buckskin; a redwood coffin-cover, fitting over the side boards, placed in position; and the grave filled and marked around with stones.

Various prophylactic measures were observed immediately after the burial. For the men and women who had handled the body, there was a purification swim before they returned to the village. For the family who had camped out during the

preparation and interment there was the purification of the house by the burning of pepperwood leaves. The personal eating utensils of the deceased were crushed and burned. This hint of property destruction by burning, which is prevalent among the central California tribes, was said not to have been in any way ceremonial but simply a prophylactic measure used both after death and during a patient's convalescence. They thought there was something evil in the continued use of baskets belonging to a dead or sick person; a sick person's chances for recovery were better when new, clean baskets were used.

There was no general destruction or burial of property with the deceased. Personal belongings were not burned. Pipes, belts, bows and arrows, and so on, were cleaned and hung inside the house, where they were especially revered by the family. Shamanistic regalia was feared but nevertheless cleaned and hung up; the things must not be burned or destroyed. Cemeteries were treated with great respect; children were prohibited from going near them and adults must not make a loud noise or walk across them.

The name of the dead person was not mentioned for a period of two to three years or until young people of the family had a child, when the name was given to the child.

There seem to have been no mourning rites or gifts to the bereaved family, as among other California peoples. Crying for the dead must take place mornings and before sundown. There was no crying after dark except by ill-intentioned persons who wished to cause a death either in their own or some other person's family. After crying for the dead, everyone must go to the river and wash his face.

### KINSHIP; SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

Kinship based on blood relationship extended to the second cousins. Sons-in-law and daughters-in-law were regarded as blood relatives so long as they were living with a blood relative. Thus all families in a small community were bound together by some kind of family tie. When husband or wife separated, however, the one who left was no longer considered a member of the family group, nor were any children that were taken along by the departing spouse. The children who remained were incorporated in the family of the father (or the mother) and were then on a par with other children of the household.

Marriage of cousins was not permitted, first and second cousins being classed with brothers and sisters. Children of cousin marriages, according to native belief, would be idiots, or would die early, or would be crooked and out of shape. Third cousins were not considered relatives and were allowed to marry.

The basis of all social life was the family with the extended family usually forming the

village group. There were no moieties or clans. An individual recognized affiliations only with his immediate relatives and with the tribal group. The family consisted of husband and wife, children, and any other unmarried relatives up to second cousins. The parents and parents-in-law with their families usually lived in a small group within the same village but not necessarily so.

A man generally lived with his parents even after marriage. He established his own home after the first child was born. If the man had sufficient means to pay outright for his wife and establish a home at once, this was considered the preferable course. My informant said: "They were just like white people, they did not stay in the same house, nor too close together, because they didn't get along well."

When the man was unable to pay outright for his wife, temporary matrilineal residence obtained. He then lived with her parents until he had paid the bride price by such services as hunting and fishing.

Aged and infirm parents formed a part of the married children's family and were cared for by them. Daughters took care of their aged parents by turns if there were no sons in the family. Both men and women were expected to care for parentless, or even motherless, infants of relatives as far distant as second cousins.

#### PROPERTY AND INHERITANCE

All land was held by the tribe. The family house was owned by both husband and wife equally. All individually made articles were personally owned. Male members of the family could not barter the woman's or children's things without consent, nor vice versa.

Male property consisted of red and black obsidian knives, canoes, skins, bows and arrows, dentalia, olivella and abalone shell strings, dance dresses, shamanistic regalia, dried venison, and so forth.

Children inherited one-half of the parents' property; the other half invariably reverted to the deceased person's family. If there were no children, all property reverted to the family of the deceased and was equally divided among the father, mother, brothers, and sisters. Except in the single instance of the family dwelling, community-owned, husband and wife never inherited from each other.

#### CHIEFTAINSHIP

A chief must be wealthy, wise, able to advise his subjects, and able to aid in war payments. The office was, roughly speaking, hereditary, from father to oldest son, provided the son fulfilled all requirements; otherwise the old men of

the tribe chose another man for his wealth and ability. Such a person was usually the son of a wealthy man and a debt girl, and was said to be "born of the blood." He was held in high esteem for either his hunting, war, or doctoring ability, and was assisted by a council of old and influential men.

A chief advised members of the tribe in personal grievances, public offenses and debts; he decided when there should be war; how much should be paid by the enemy as indemnity; settled disputes between members of the tribe and those outside the group; and acted in a general advisory capacity.

#### WAR

War was carried on in retaliation for murder or injury of tribal members or for abduction of women and children.

Internece warfare was usually caused by jealousy over women and was settled by the chief's arrangement for indemnity.

When war was impending, the old men and chief held a council in the sweat house to decide whether to accept payment or to kill in revenge. Deliberations might go on without definite decision for a year or two, but when the council finally agreed to accept payment for an offense, negotiations were immediately begun through a hired go-between, accompanied by an assistant. The latter was sent along to make sure the intermediary was dealing fairly with the people he represented. The assistant had nothing to say during the negotiations; he simply reported the go-between's activities. Delegates might be either men or women, the only requirement being that they must be good talkers. After it was decided to accept payment, word was sent to the enemy and a place of meeting designated for the settlement parley. There the go-betweens met the enemy representatives and settled upon the date when payment was to be made. Both tribes then moved to the place designated, usually a well-known prairie, and camped on opposite sides of the plain. The go-between's work was then finished, and the ceremony of payment taken up by the chief and council in stereotyped order. Such a settlement, witnessed by Nora at Lighthouse, is described as follows:

"They had a big camp; everybody came. In the morning each side sent out both men and women. They met in the center of the ground and crossed over between each other, then returned to their own sides. All had sharp sticks and arrows. Usually two women took the lead when they crossed over. As they passed each other, one side said: "We don't want trouble!" The other side replied, "We don't want trouble." When they had crossed over and back, all sat on the ground facing each other and the family of the murdered man had a big cry. Then the other side began to carry

things over to pay them. When they carried over enough, they all stopped crying, and all were friends again. They visited and said, "Now we are friends." Then they ate, and had a big time. If they didn't give enough payment, they fought."

When payment was insufficient and they decided to fight, a ceremonial dance was first held at Me'ss-e-ah. Two headmen and the shaman danced and sang for an hour or so, praying for the success of the undertaking. During the actual fighting they came within arrow's range and spread out in a loose line. They jumped about to dodge the arrows. Nora said that usually few people were killed in an intertribal war, not more than four or five, but many were killed when they fought with the Centerville (Wiyot) people, because "they always had trouble with them anyway."

A victory dance was held at Me'ss-e-ah following success in war. Two headmen danced and sang when the whole tribe assembled. Scalps were not taken. Each side was permitted to search the battlefield for the dead and wounded without molestation. The slain were carried home by friends and buried with regular observances.

War weapons were chiefly bows and arrows and double-edged stone knives. Clubs of hardwood with heavy pointed heads were used for hand-to-hand encounters. They also threw rocks by hand and were said to be able to throw with the speed of a bullet.

According to Nora, the Bear River were more peaceful than the surrounding tribes, and war was infrequent, but they sometimes aided the Mattole in their disputes with the Sinkyone and Wiyot. One war with the Sinkyone, at Upper Mattole, was brought on because both Sinkyone and Mattole claimed the discoverer's right to a whale which had washed onto the beach south of Centerville, in the Bear River territory. The Bear River people aided the Mattole in that war as well as in other wars with the Wiyot and whites. They did not, generally, unite with the Mattole in that tribe's disputes with the Briceland and Shelter Cove people (Sinkyone). They considered such wars as of a private nature and of no concern to the Bear River people.

The next most frequent cause for war was injury by her husband to a woman's brothers or male cousins. The following tale related by Nora illustrated this point clearly.

A man from Briceland married a Bear River woman. He went away for two or three days, telling her he was going to hunt deer. He went to Bear river and drowned his little brother-in-law. Bear River men tracked him. They sent another of the wife's brothers to Briceland and he told her. He told her not to cry or let her husband know that she knew anything about the murder, but to bring her husband on a visit to her parents. He also told her to carry her little baby herself so that nothing could happen to it. Then the brother went back to Davis creek and they made an ambush for the husband. The woman did just as her

brother told her. She and her husband went to Bear river to visit her parents and when they passed Davis creek, the people met them there and killed the man. The woman lived with her people after that. Briceland people were going to fight the Davis Creek people, but when the chief heard what the man had done, he said, "That's right, we cannot kill people because that man was bad."

Bear River people had one serious war with the Wiyot. As the result of a personal grievance, a Davis Creek man killed a Wiyot. The latter retaliated by stealthily entering Bear River territory, slaughtering the sleeping people, and throwing their bodies into Davis creek. The survivors made war on the Wiyot and killed about twenty before a money settlement was arranged.

Nora said the only trouble her people had with the whites was caused by Redwood Indians (Whilkut) stealing and killing the whites' cattle at Hydesville. The whites retaliated by raiding a dance at Blue Lake and killing the guilty and innocent alike. Most of the Bear River people were attending and consequently were slaughtered. The survivors were driven to the Smith River reservation by the soldiers from the military garrison at Bucksport.

#### TRADE

Trade was principally with the Hupa, even though they were the farthest removed from the Bear River country. However, Bear River people traded with all their neighbors to a greater or lesser degree. There was a well-known trail leading to the Hupa and their neighbors--from the mouth of Bear river northward over the present Wildcat Ridge road, thence easterly through Monument and the intervening Wiyot and Nongatl territory. Sporadic commerce with the Sinkyone was carried on over the Mattole trade route, but such trade was slight and did not extend on to the Lassik and Wailaki territory. There seems to have been an antipathy between the Lassik and Bear River people. Lassik people were said to have killed traders on the slightest provocation.

Journeys were made on foot and trade goods transported on the back. With the Hupa they traded angelica root, wild tobacco obtained from the Mattole river (considered very superior), abalone shell, and various foodstuffs, receiving in exchange hill grass with which to make rope and carved pine nuts for beads; with the Wiyot they traded abalone shell, wild tobacco, and foodstuffs in exchange for canoes and other foodstuffs. However, trade must have been limited by the fact that the tribes had many articles in common. The principal localized products were wild tobacco on the Mattole river and the Hupa pine-nut beads. Black and red obsidian money was common to the whole area.

According to Nora, "We did not trade with the Covelo (Wailaki) people and but little with the

Briceland (Sinkyone), because we always had trouble with them. We were afraid of the Covelo people because they made a special kind of poison that we did not know, and when people went there, they poisoned them. They lived only one week or perhaps two weeks."

#### MONEY

Knives of red and black obsidian, woodpecker scalps, and yellowhammer-feather headbands were considered as treasure. They were heirlooms and were not transferred except under dire necessity.

Actual money for purchasing commodities was valued in the following order: Small dentalia, large dentalia, small and large olivella strings, small clamshell strings, and abalone-shell strings.

Trade was carried on by exchange of canoes, rabbitskin blankets, deer-hide blankets, elkhorn purses, bows and arrows, and baskets, etc. All articles in daily use, even food, were bartered.

Treasure obsidian, woodpecker scalps, and yellowhammer feather bands were displayed during the important dance ceremonies. Red and black obsidian was chipped into knives from 4 to 10 in. in length. Woodpecker scalps were evenly sewn to a strip of buckskin about 2 in. wide. These bands were tied around the forehead and treasured for ostentatious display as well as for their intrinsic worth. Yellowhammer tail feathers were sewn flat to a band of buckskin, with the pointed ends forming a serrated edge on both margins. They used this band for the same purpose as the woodpecker-scalp headdress.

Dentalia were measured shell by shell to determine the worth of a string. Very small, perfect dentalia were more valuable than the long shells. Both were strung on iris grass. A string was measured from the grasp of the middle finger and thumb to the three tattooed marks on the left forearm; and was valued according to the number of shells contained in that length.

Olivella and clamshells were perforated and strung into long strings, which were worn by women at dance ceremonies. Abalone shell was broken and the pieces ground into uniform size before they were perforated and strung. (Pl. 7e.)

#### HOUSES

Bear River houses were of three types: temporary shelter, dwelling house, and sweat house. All were built on the same plan, but differed in size and elaboration.

Temporary shelters were raised on unexcavated ground; brush and grass covering substituted for the wooden slabs of the permanent house; the smoke hole was enlarged to such an extent that the structure was almost roofless. These shelters did not last more than one season.

The dwelling house and the sweat house were lean-to structures built over a rectangular excavation, for the dwelling house about 2 ft. deep, for the sweat house about 4 ft. Other dimensions of the dwelling house varied with the size of the family. The sweat house framework was covered with split slabs of wood or bark, an opening being left in the front wall for entrance. A small opening in the long, sloping roof served as a smoke hole.

Houses were of redwood preferably, but other woods could be used. The soft, straight-grained redwood could be more easily worked with their primitive implements; also a single tree was more than sufficient for a large house.

Procuring lumber was a truly arduous task. It was obtained from the upper reaches of the Bear river, near Rainbow ridge. Trees were burned down and cut into the desired lengths by hacking and chipping with the stone adz. Boards were split off by setting elkhorn wedges close together in a row straight across the diameter of the tree. Beginning at the top of the log, the wedges were reset for each succeeding board until the entire trunk was worked into lumber. Finally, the roughly split slabs were trimmed with the flint adz. They were floated downstream held together with bast rope or buckskin lashings.

Two forked posts first sunk into ground at corners of the front end of excavation. Large timber selected for ridgepole, laid on ground in front of end posts. Poles for front of building cut in lengths of about 8 or 9 ft. Those for combined rear, roof in about 14- to 16-ft. lengths. Short front poles and long back poles laid on opposite sides of ridge with ends meeting. Then separated into pairs, using one front and one back pole, lashed to ridgepole with buckskin thongs. Heavy ridgepole then raised and ends slipped into forked upright end posts. Lower ends of front poles stuck into ground and long roof poles laid in unbroken line to ground to back of excavation. Triangular side spaces between roof and ground filled with poles cut to measure imbedded in edge of the excavation at one end, lashed to roof pole at other. Skeleton framework then solidly cross-lashed with hazel brush, broad wooden slabs leaned upright against frame. Boards for side covering reached from ground to sloping roof poles. Lashed ends covered by other narrower pieces of wood or strips of bark.

On rear sloping side, close to ridgepole, a space about 2 ft. wide by 4 ft. long left open as a smoke hole.

Door in front wall a space between upright poles with no cross lashings; covering was skin or removable board slab. Space between top or doorway and ridgepole covered with bark boards lashed to under structure with buckskin strips.

## DRESS AND ADORNMENT

The everyday dress of both sexes was unornamented buckskin. Men wore a soft buckskin shirt, hanging midway between the thigh and knee, belted at the waist with a girdle of elkhide. The shirt was cut from two hides, the widest part, where the legs emerged from the body, being used for the shoulder part of the shirt. The seams ran on the shoulders and underarm. Sleeves were attached only for winter. Sewing perforations were punched with a bone awl and lacings were of deer sinew. The front opening was also tied together with buckskin string.

For dance costumes men wore buckskin shirts embroidered with white iris-grass string, abalone shell, and beads. The shirt was tucked high around the thighs in order to give freedom for dancing. Male dancers wore a headband of raccoon or gray squirrel skin decorated with whole skins of hummingbirds and woodpecker scalps. Sometimes individual feathers of these birds were sewn flat to the band; or for a shaman's dance a headband of braided buckskin was tied at the back, adorned with two bunches of mixed yellowhammer, bluejay, eagle, and grouse feathers at each side. Ground abalone shells were tied into the bunch of feathers with seal and sea-lion whiskers. Male shamans also wore necklaces of seal and sea-lion teeth.

Blankets of whole deerskin with the hair on were worn for winter protection. Leggings were not worn, but moccasins of elkhide were used in summer hunting as protection against snakes, hot rocks, and sand. How these were cut and made, my informant did not know.

Women ordinarily wore a plain buckskin dress: two aprons, the back overlapping the front, fastened to the waist with buckskin strings. A short skin shirt, with sleeves attached, reached just below the waist and completed the costume. It was cut from two small deer hides, which were joined at the shoulders; the sides were then sewn together. After the sleeves had been attached at the shoulder, the underarm seam was made.

In summer women wore the basket hat; in winter, a simple ring of twisted deerskin to keep the hair in place. Before puberty girls were not allowed to wear basketry hats, the ring being worn the whole year. The girl's ring was ornamented with beads and pieces of abalone shell suspended in front of the ears; the women's was plain.

Women's dance dresses were fringed along the bottom and decorated with shells and beads in patterns sewn with white mountain grass. The wild-cat jacket used by girls was similarly decorated. The female shaman's dress was the ornamented type used for all ceremonies except the curative dance. For the latter the plain buckskin dress was worn along with the shaman's headdress. The male shaman's necklaces of seal and sea-lion teeth were not allowed to be worn by female shamans; instead they used strings of olivella shells of different sizes; of ground, crenated abalone shell, and of carved pine nuts.

Men and women both had their ears pierced in early life. Women wore abalone-shell ornaments in the ears; men wore unornamented hardwood sticks about an inch long and an inch in diameter, rounded on the outside and flat on the side next to the head.

Tattooing.--Both sexes tattooed for purposes of identification and adornment. The male identification pattern had either been forgotten by my informants or was not particularly noted. They said when boys or girls became separated or stolen from the tribe, they could always be identified by their tattoo marks. Men tattooed on the forehead; also on the left wrist with horizontal lines about 1 in. long, one above the other, for measuring money strings. These marks were called "three pieces." Zigzag tattoo patterns running from shoulder to shoulder in the form of a necklace were also used by men for ornamental purposes.

Women were tattooed at their first puberty rite. They did not use the zigzag pattern nor the "three pieces" marks of the men. There was no particular ceremony or taboo connected with tattooing. Pine pitch was burned in the hollow of a rock and the soot gathered on an inverted stone. When a sufficient amount had been collected, one particular woman, who knew the technique, did the tattooing. She pricked incisions close together on the face with a sharp flint and rubbed the soot into the wounds. This was repeated from time to time until the design was completed.

Goddard<sup>15</sup> quoted Gladys Reichard's informant, Mrs. Prince, as saying: "I was tattooed by Nora's mother. Someone sat on my legs and held my arms and head." This statement was contradicted by Nora: "My mother did not know how to tattoo, only certain women knew how to tattoo and they always did it."

Their characteristic marks were two lines running from the outer edge of the nostrils to the bottom of the chin following the lines at the corners of the mouth. From these long lines, there were short (half-inch), horizontal lines. Besides, a straight line ran from the center of the edge of the lower lip to the bottom of the chin. None of the lines were wide as in Wiyot tattoo patterns.

Nora described tattoo marks of the surrounding peoples--the Wiyot, the Mattole, and the people on the east side of the town of South Fork, probably the Lassik. According to her the Wiyot made three broad bands from the lower lip to the chin and two smaller lines upward from the corners of the lips halfway to the outer angle of the nose. (I was able to verify this by personal observation.) The Lassik (?) tattooed a bridle pattern on the side of the face from above the outer angle of the lips to the upper front of the ear: two parallel lines, about an inch apart, crosshatched with narrower lines in a diamond pattern. They had

<sup>15</sup>Op. cit., 295.

no chin tattooing (which statement is doubtful since all of these people were consistently chin tattooers). The Mattole tattoo marks consisted of three more or less broad marks on the chin, as among the Wiyot, with the addition of a series of dots from the corners of the mouth to the lower edge of the ears and a row of dots across the forehead. Isaac Duncan, my Mattole informant, denied the forehead tattoo marks: "They did not tattoo the forehead except when they put a single round dot on the forehead between and just above the eyebrows. They did this when a man had committed a crime and a person so marked did not live in the village. He hung around the outside and could not buy himself a wife."

Powers<sup>14</sup> states: "In another regard also, the Mattoal differ from other tribes and that is that the men tattoo. Their distinctive mark is a round blue spot in the center of the forehead. The squaws tattoo pretty much over their faces."

One of my Sinkyone informants, Jenny Young, of Westport, said that "My nephew, born in Mattole, had a mark on his forehead, just one short line running up and down between the eyebrows, and also one little piece of a perpendicular line about an inch long from his underlip onto his chin. I could tell that he was Mattole by these tattoo marks."

Head deformation was not practiced.

#### VISITING CUSTOMS

When visiting, men sat crosslegs with the knees drawn up in front and the arms around the knees. This was polite posture. The accepted sitting posture for women while visiting was cross-legged with the hands in the lap. When one was invited to eat, it was considered impolite to eat much; eating should be slow with no appearance of hunger. Refusal of a second helping was compulsory. Women observed the same rules as the men; furthermore, they must not look around the room or directly at the host.

#### DANCES

Dances were few. The one annual dance for the assurance of prosperity and the increase of crops for the following year was held in the summer. War dances, puberty dances, shaman training, and curative dances, were held with the concurrent event. Only war dances and those for hunting and gambling success were held in the sweat house.

An annual dance was held when the first acorns were ripe. The shaman set the time and place of meeting and officiated as master of ceremonies. A large brush enclosure was erected and the dance began as soon as the acorns were harvested. One

or more shamans danced around a center fire. All able-bodied men and women danced in a circle about the shamans; the aged and the very young sat in an outer circle surrounding the dancers and helped with the singing. The performance lasted for five days and nights and was of such a serious nature that loud talking or fun of any kind was forbidden. Nora was horrified when clowns were suggested as part of the activities. At the end of the five-day period the first acorns of the year were pounded and cooked by women selected for that task. Shamans instructed them in the proper procedure of cooking. The whole group partook of the breakfast of new acorns. Everyone must eat or it was believed death would result. Immediately after they broke camp and went home.

Warriors danced at Me'ss-e-ah for the success of their enterprises and later in celebration of victory. These, as well as dances for hunting and gambling luck, were strictly masculine, although the male shaman and headmen were the only performers. The congregated men merely helped sing.

Both sexes participated in the dance during a puberty ceremony, which was always held in the parents' house. There was no ghost dance, although Nora said the South Fork (Lassik ?) had it.

#### GAMES

There were few games. Four gambling games mentioned by Nora were: hand game, ring-and-pin game, small-sticks game--played by both men and women, and a special button game played by women alone.

The hand game was the most important and was identical with that of central California:

Six players sat crosslegs, opposite each other (4 or 5 ft. between). Log laid in front of players served as drum. Each side drummed, sang favorite gambling songs when in possession of dice. Dice were four pieces of wood, half round, about 2 1/2 in. long by 1 in. in diameter. Five pieces ornamented by burning and one plain ace. Two dice wrapped in grass and held one in each hand of a player; opposite side guessed by pointing to hand which believed held ace. Pointing with one finger extended, remainder of hand closed, indicated right hand; with index and little finger extended, remainder closed, indicated left hand. As soon as guess was to be made, singing stopped. Unsuccessful guess cost penalty, but dice not passed; correct guess drew a penalty from players and loss of dice.

Ring-and-pin game played with six coalesced salmon vertebrae and 8-inch whittled stick attached to larger end of vertebrae by about same length of string. Count made when player swung vertebrae onto point of stick. Details of counting not known. Play was sometimes high, as was true in all other games.

The small-sticks game was played with a bundle of about twenty sticks, presumably marked, but details of the game were not available.

<sup>14</sup>Stephen Powers, CNAE 3: 109, 1877.

The women's special gambling game was played with buttons of clamshell, which they snapped with a larger disk into a cuplike depression in the ground. The first one getting all the buttons in won. The play was passed when a player failed to score.

Foot racing seems to have been popular with young boys and girls. There was no football, shinny, or stilt-walking. Boys shot at targets with diminutive bows and arrows. Little girls made dolls of leaves, but most of their time was spent imitating their mothers' activities.

An acorn buzzer was used by small children. The acorns were strung on iris grass knotted between each acorn to prevent slipping. They were bounced on the teeth by stretching the string at each end, and the resultant noise regulated into different tones by the lips of the player much as one plays the jew's-harp.

### SUBSISTENCE

Bear River people had no agriculture, depending entirely upon wild seeds, grains, and nuts for vegetable food, and upon hunting and fishing for animal food. All varieties of edible seeds and grains were used.

#### Vegetable Foods

Seed and root-gathering activities were seasonal. The whole tribe migrated to the hills during harvest time. There was a sharp division of labor; women gathered and prepared for storage all vegetable food; men did the hunting and fishing.

Boiling of all food was by means of hot rocks dropped into baskets partly filled with water.

Hot stones handled with hazel-brush tongs, others substituted for cooled ones until water boiled, then seed flour added, a little at a time, until thin gruel or thick mush resulted, according to taste of cook.

Ripening acorns and buckeyes were watched for by men while out hunting. As soon as these foods began to fall, the hunters reported to the headmen that they were ready for gathering. Men climbed into the trees and shook the limbs to dislodge the nuts. Women picked and stored them temporarily in large conical baskets.

After all were gathered, they were boiled with shells on, shelled, and pounded coarsely to break up nuts. Group of women dug large hole in sand, packed broken nuts in it, another poured heated water over broken nut meats in sand pit. When nuts sufficiently leached, adhering sand washed off, nuts dried in sun, packed in baskets for winter. Buckeyes not pounded into flour until immediately before cooking. Were eaten raw on arduous trips because they were said to "taste cold as ice cream," thus served to quench thirst and satisfy hunger. Acorns treated exactly as buckeyes up to

time of first pounding. Acorn meats ground into fine flour, poured into winter storage basket.

White, yellow tarweed gathered by means of oval elongated basketry fan with handle about 2 ft. long. Fanned seeds toward them into deep, flaring, conical basket slung in front by rawhide thong around waist. Emptied full basket into larger conical basket. Pigweed seeds, wild oats similarly gathered and prepared.

Seeds parched by shaking and rotating with hot rocks in large flat basket. Cooled rocks removed, others substituted until seeds evenly browned. Hulls then easily removed and seeds partly dried, more easily pounded into pinole, flour. Parched seeds pounded with stone pestle in deep flaring hopper basket. Basket placed over large, slightly hollowed-out stone slab. Pounded meal removed from grinding basket into large flat winnowing basket. Winnowing basket rotated, shaken, blown upon to remove all hulls and flour then stored in large baskets for winter.

Sunflower seeds gathered, dried in sun. Peeled, eaten raw, or parched, pounded, winnowed, stored for winter. Red clover leaves eaten raw with meat and other foods. Ate seeds, raw leaves of gray-flowered clover with roasted pepper nuts. Grass nuts eaten raw, considered great delicacy. Indian potatoes (camas) dug with digging stick, prepared in two ways for storage. Stored raw in baskets slung to tree trunks or hung inside of house for immediate use. Winter supply assured by roasting before packing in baskets; these camas kept all winter.

Roasting by hot rocks and sand. Hole in sand about 1 1/2 ft. deep lined with even-sized stones. Fire built on top. When rocks on bottom thoroughly heated, fire scraped out and hot rocks covered with layer of young alder leaves and grass. Camas arranged evenly, covered with alder leaves, then hot sand and rocks. Cooked one day and night, then cooled, packed in storage baskets for winter. Young alder leaves used in cooking said to make camas sweet, better flavored.

Soaproot used for hair, basketry, body washing. Considered edible when properly cooked. To remove strong taste, cleaned thoroughly and peeled, then wrapped in alder leaves and cooked in ashes with camas.

Wild onions prepared same way. Onions stored for winter but not soaproot. Pepperwood nuts roasted in ashes, packed in small baskets for winter. Used for pepper, eaten with meat, vegetables.

Unidentified stalks and roots are listed as follows:

Yakh'ală (grows flat to ground, has blue flowers on top, shaped like onion set).

Só'le (roasted in fire, eaten as soon as cooked, sweet, resembles tule stalks, about 2 ft. high).

Kitcla'oan (grows in marshy places, looks like calla-lily bulb; bulbs roasted with camas, not stored for winter).

Nowadays no more camas, sōlé, kūtcla'oan, or yakha'lā, due to cultivation of fields, sheep, and cattle grazing.

All kinds wild berries gathered by women. Blackberries, manzanita berries, elderberries, thimbleberries, huckleberries, salmonberries, picked over in special basket. Some eaten raw with meat, but most varieties sun dried on large flat leaves, or on flat baskets. Women stirred, turned them. When evenly dried, packed in deep baskets between layers of leaves. Baskets stacked one on top of other, with concave basketry cover on top of bottom basket, into which bottom of upper basket fitted. Small even-sized pieces of wood held lower basket off ground, prevented contents from molding.

Dried berries cooked in acorn cakes, eaten with meat or resoaked and eaten with acorn mush, tarweed seed, etc. Strawberries not dried, eaten raw in season. Madroña berries eaten raw or roasted like pepper nuts. Wild cherries not plentiful, long trips made to gather, sometimes into Mattole country, where more abundant. Dried, packed like berries. Considered great delicacy as accompaniment to all varieties of meat.

Seaweed gathered, dried in sun, packed in baskets for winter. Not resoaked or cooked, only heated slowly by fire to soften before eating.

Salt made from sections dried kelp. Scraped off outside of kelp. Stored in dried sections, tied at end with rawhide thong.

### Hunting

Large game, such as bear, elk, and deer, and many kinds of small game were plentiful throughout the Bear River territory. Hunting was of the greatest importance. The people depended upon the flesh of animals for food and upon the hides for clothing, blankets, and other skin-made articles. They used the sinew for their bows and the bone and horn for many of their implements. Game was shot with bow and arrow, netted, snared, trapped.

Boys began training for the hunt at about the eighth to the tenth year. From their elders, who were skilled in these arts, they learned to make traps, snares, bows, and arrows. They were taught the arts of trapping, snaring, and fishing, and all the accompanying activities such as skin dressing, string and net making, etc. Small boys practiced shooting at targets with miniature bows and arrows. Before they were allowed to participate in a serious hunt, they were instructed by the shaman for a long time. He taught them the lore of hunting and fishing, along with moral and social precepts, as well as the taboos and songs and dances which would aid them in their pursuits. At the age of about fifteen a boy might be allowed to accompany a man on a real hunt, and, if successful, could then continue alone or be included in the regular hunting members of the group. Men hunted in groups of twos and threes or sometimes more, but never in large numbers.

For good luck charms, a hunter used a deer's front leg bone hung around the neck by a string; also angelica root, which he rubbed in his hair and on his hands. He sometimes carried a small piece of angelica root about his clothes or suspended from his neck.

Success in hunting was acquired more by skill than by supernatural aid, but hunters went to Me'ss-e-ah and danced for one night before going on a dangerous hunt. To protect themselves against contamination, they scrupulously observed a taboo on sexual intercourse for a day and a night before going on any kind of hunt. A man did not hunt for five days during the time of his wife's menstrual period lest all game should escape, or actually turn and attack him. They believed that without sex abstinence, deer would scent and sight them from a distance and would snort and run away; also, that the black and grizzly bear would attack such a man on sight and tear him to pieces. If he should go on the water, either river or ocean, it would become so rough that his boat would always upset, and he be drowned. This prohibition against sexual intercourse held for five days after the killing of a deer, to protect women against sickness. Fishing, however, was permissible during that period because, from the native point of view, fish were so much lower in the scale of mentality that they allowed themselves to be caught as readily at that time as at any other.

Bows and arrows were relied upon in the chase. Snares of iris string and rope were used for catching deer and elk.

Snare loops suspended from bent-over branch, staked or tied at side, bottom to hold open. Set snare in well-traveled trail leading through brush. Four or five men surrounded game, drove it toward snare. When sprung, stout limb jerked noose upward over animal's neck, sometimes breaking it, other times holding until hunters arrived. Immediately slit throat, cut body down, dressed.

Animal skinned, gutted; heart, liver, stomach tied with thong for handpacking. Hind quarters cut off, slung over shoulders by a thong, carried to camp. Front quarters either slung to tree limb by rope against animals, or covered with leaves, grass against flies, left in shady place until hunter returned. If animal not too large, hunter packed whole at once, after hide, entrails removed.

When two men shot the same deer, the one whose arrow was found in a vital spot was entitled to the game, but he must give portions to all other participants. He always kept the ears and tongue, which were considered great delicacies, as well as the antlers, hoofs, brains, hide, tendons, and part of the meat. The butchering and portioning of the meat was left until the carcass had been packed to camp. They cut up the meat outside the house, using what they required for their immediate needs. The remainder was cut into strips and dried for winter.

Pieces 1 in. thick, 3 in. wide, 6-8 in. long. Strips of meat, tongue, ears strung on long slender pepperwood stick, supported over fire by two pronged sticks. Meat then smoked over small fire of young willows about two days, packed into conical baskets. Meat storage baskets stacked two deep, same as berry storage. Upper basket covered with basketry lid tied in place with rawhide. Over lid large piece deer hide drawn down on body of basket, fastened securely with rawhide thongs wrapped round and tightly tied.

Removed brains, tongue, eyes, and antlers from head of deer or elk; skinned, cleaned remainder; roasted whole with butchered carcass. Tongue, ears eaten roasted, or smoke-dried, kept for winter. Brains used for tanning. Antlers for knives, fish hooks, etc.

Men always cut up and cooked the meat. Women were not allowed to handle any raw meat but could cook it after it was smoked or dried.

Cooking pits were similar to those used for vegetable foods. Some of the hunters prepared the roasting pit while others cut up the carcass.

Meat covered with young alder leaves, hot rocks, sand on top. Left all day undisturbed. When cooked, meat exposed by scraping off hot rocks, sand, and top layer of leaves. Meat lifted from pit with hazel-brush tongs, put on curved fir-bark platters. Then ready for individual servings in basketry plates. Stored dried meat cooked in baskets by stone boiling, same as seeds.

Fawn, raccoon, cottontail, squirrel snared, shot. Skinned as deer, elk. Slit open, cleaned, cooked over fire by sticks of young willow, pepperwood, about same size and length, stuck fanwise into ground at such an angle that upper ends came directly over fire. Ends pierced flesh at different points, so meat well spread and evenly cooked. Birds cooked over fire by same method.

Skins of animals such as cottontail, rabbit, wildcat, fawn, and others were used variously.

All animals were thought to have been human at one time and to have had the power of speech. Black bear and dog are supposed to be the only ones who have retained that ability, but they now rarely speak to people, and when they do, it means disaster and death to the person. Black bear, wildcat, and panther were never snared but always shot with the bow and arrow. Bear was prepared up to the time of cooking as were deer and elk, except that its flesh was cut up and the pieces cooked like the whole of smaller animals.

End of meat put over fire at angle, fat dripped into large clam, abalone shell underneath. Shells removed when filled, others substituted. Warm oil poured into sections of previously dried whip-kelp retainer about 3 ft. long which was tied at bottom with buckskin. When filled, top also tied, stored for winter. Fat warmed, poured

over vegetable food, dried berries. Said to make berries sweeter, more tasty.

Rats, field mice thrown into fire whole, singed, cleaned, washed, wrapped in leaves, cooked in hot ashes. Gophers eaten only by sick or convalescent persons. Relatives, friends dug them out of ground at patient's request. Prepared same as rats, mice.

June bugs, black caterpillars thrown into fire, roasted, eaten at once. Angeworms, black caterpillars used together or separately, for making thin soup. Grasshoppers not eaten by Bear River people, although neighbor tribes ate them.

Ground squirrels not eaten because lived with rattlesnakes. "In olden times there were no rattlesnakes in Bear River territory, but now there are some."

Coyote was not killed because he was believed to have been a person. For the same reason fox and wolf, coyote's closest relatives, were allowed to live unmolested.

Grizzly bear was killed for its pelt but the flesh was not eaten. Raccoon and skunk were shot and snared for their skin but the flesh was not eaten because it was too strongly flavored.

Seals and sea lion were hunted for their flesh and oil. Unstable canoes<sup>15</sup> and primitive equipment made their capture a very hard pursuit.

The fact that a hunter must venture into the ocean where the seal or sea lion could demolish or overturn his boat, made this type of hunting so dangerous that all possible precautions were taken. Hunters first observed the taboos against sexual intercourse; then they made a pilgrimage to Me'ss-e-ah where they danced and sang for one night. Upon their return to the village, they took a sweat bath; swam in the river after the bath; rubbed angelica root into their hair and on their hands and tied their charms of deer bone or angelica root round their necks. A raccoon-skin quiver was selected to hold the equipment such as arrows, rope, harpoon points, etc., because it was thought to give luck to the hunter. Quivers of wildcat skin, used in land hunting, were barred because they were believed to cause rough water. Menstruating women were forbidden to approach the shore for fear they would make the water rough and cause the boats to capsize. Propitious weather was determined by the old people, who climbed to the top of a high rock, called Sugar Bowl, on the northern side of the mouth of Bear river. There they washed their hands and faces in a beneficent spring at the side of the rock. One hair from the head was pulled out and held to the wind. If the hair did not blow, they knew it would be a good day for hunting, and the hunters immediately put out to sea in their largest canoes, using four to five paddlers. The hunting grounds were the rocks some distance off shore. Beacon fires were kept going on the cliffs

<sup>15</sup>Goddard, op. cit., 294: "There were no canoes on Bear river. The sturgeon did not come up the river and there was no way of fishing in the ocean."

and beach while the hunters were out, which might be all night. The animals were hunted with a long harpoon shaft equipped with a detachable head of deer bone. A long bast rope was attached to the spear point and coiled over the left shoulder. When the animal was struck, the spearhead was imbedded in the flesh and detached itself from the shaft. The shaft was quickly thrown back into the boat, and the game was towed to shore by means of the attached rope. They did not attempt to kill the animals while they were in the water, but towed each one to the beach and clubbed it to death. There they gouged out the imbedded harpoon head, and returned to the hunting grounds for the next kill. When they had killed all the game they required or could get, they returned to land and divided the booty evenly among the hunters. The game was then skinned, cleaned and butchered, the flesh and oil prepared exactly as was a bear. The whiskers were saved to tie to the feather headdress for dances, and the teeth were strung for a necklace to be worn on such occasions. Only men were allowed to wear these ornaments. There is no record that the hides of these animals were used, but the oil was tried out and packed in sections of dried kelp. It was used on any kind of dried berries containing seeds and also for medicine. The tried-out flesh was browned over the fire and packed for winter use.

Whales were often washed ashore at Lighthouse, near the mouth of Bear river at a place where the boats put out to sea for seal hunts. They were the property of everyone. The man who discovered the whale had the right to select his portion of the carcass, and after that, all shared alike in the division of the meat. The flesh was tried out over the fire, and the collected oil stored the same way as bear and seal oil. It was used for the same purposes as the other animal oils described. Whale meat was subjected to further cooking over a fire of green alder or white willow and thimbleberry brush, until it became very thin and assumed a glassy appearance. This was considered a delicacy and was stored for winter use.

Bear River people used almost all kinds of birds for food except crow, eagle, dove, bluejay, hummingbird and yellowhammer. Crow and dove were said to be people, and were not molested, while bluejay, yellowhammer and hummingbird were killed for their feathers alone. Shags, ducks, quail, grouse, geese and pigeon were all netted. Sometimes a very good hunter could bring down geese and some of the larger birds with the bow and arrow, but they depended mostly upon snares for that kind of game. These snares were made of iris string in the shape of bags which were stretched open and held up by a trigger to which a long string was attached. Food was scattered on the ground beneath the bag, and a watcher, concealed behind brush or a rock, waited until the birds gathered under it and then pulled the string attached to the supporting trigger, whereupon the bag collapsed, catching the birds in its

meshes. Redwood rafts of eight to ten logs lashed together were used for reaching the rocks where young shags lived in greatest numbers. Birds too young to fly were simply gathered and placed in a netted bag with a basketry cover attached to the top. This sort of hunting was carried on at night by the aid of a light on the rocks where they nested. The light was supposed to have supernatural power. It was made by some secret process or of special materials. My informant did not know how it was made because young people were not allowed to know the process.

All birds were thrown into the fire and singed, then split open, cleaned, and cooked over the fire impaled on a stick. Sometimes the stick was held in the cook's hand and sometimes it was stuck into the ground at such an angle that the upper end was directly over the fire. Small birds were also put into the cleft end of a stick and cooked over the fire in the usual way.

Various kinds of birds' eggs were eaten. Shag eggs were cooked in hot sand at the site where they were gathered. Nora said they were not good to eat unless cooked very soon after they were taken. Eggs of quail, grouse, geese, duck, and other birds were stone boiled.

#### Fishing

Dependence upon fishing as a means of sustenance was next in importance to hunting. Seasonal runs of large fish such as king salmon and steelhead provided an abundant supply for winter preservation. The whole tribe camped on the banks of the streams during the run, which usually continued for a period of from four to six weeks. Men caught the fish and women cleaned, smoked, and dried them for winter. Smaller varieties, such as trout, suckers, bullheads, and so forth, were caught throughout the year. They were roasted and eaten at once. Fish also were shot with bow and arrow, speared, netted, and angled.

Nets were many shapes and sizes, from small dip nets to large salmon nets, with their correspondingly finer and coarser meshes.

Salmon were shot with the bow and arrow and speared with a double-pronged fish spear, the point of which was elk or deer bone and the shaft was spruce. Salmon and steelhead were caught in great quantities with large nets which were set in the eddies of the stream by means of a canoe. Grass ropes fastened to the upper ends of the net were tied to trees or brush on the bank or held taut by men in canoes. The lower edge was weighted with stones tied into the mesh so that it would sink into the water. They were usually stretched across the stream, immediately below an eddy. During the height of the run netting continued from daybreak until dark. Nets were left out a very short time before being pulled by the fishermen. Too many large salmon caught in a net at one time could damage it beyond immediate repair or could carry it away from its moorings. In olden times

people were afraid to fish at night because they thought if they did so the fish would not run the next year. After the coming of the whites they fished at all times, although they still maintained the taboos and rules of olden days.

There was no taboo against sexual intercourse nor prohibition of fishing during the wife's menstrual period as in hunting, but it was necessary that the first salmon caught be treated with great care in cutting and cooking. The fish must be cut slanting, never straight across, with a flint knife used only for that purpose. It could not be cooked whole, but must be cut into diagonal strips which were cooked and eaten at the edge of the river before sundown. First salmon must not be cooked after dark. There was no special ceremony or other taboo; no special person was required to catch the first fish, nor need a shaman be present. There was no dance. The requirement was merely that the first salmon be prepared in this manner until the time when the first geese began to fly. Afterward, the fish could be cut straight across with any instrument and could be cooked after dark. This careful treatment was thought to be necessary to insure a good run for the next season.

Great numbers of eels were caught in special eel baskets which were set in the eddies. First eels were subjected to the same special care in cutting as were the first salmon. They must not be skinned or caught after dark, otherwise it was believed they would not come up the river the next year. After the coming of the whites fishing was carried on after dark and the other taboos disregarded.

Salmon slit open, heads cut off, saved for making glue. Body smoked, sun dried. Packed in large baskets, which stacked two deep, with intervening concave basketry lid separating two. Dried fish prepared by first soaking, then stone boiling. Fresh salmon cleaned, cooked whole by barbecue method same as deer, elk, etc. Salmon eggs taken from spawning fish, dried for winter.

Dams of rocks, sticks built across river about 10 ft. below riffles, baskets fastened to sticks at intervals of 2, 3 ft. Baskets about 3 ft. deep, 2 1/2, 3 ft. in diameter. Left several hours before emptied into boat and reset for next catch. Enclosed dam of loosely piled rocks, about 10 ft. long, below riffles. Eels squeezed through rocks, caught in enclosure. Dam left unmolested for 2, 3 days after which rocks gradually removed. As each eel appeared, was speared with a sharp, pointed deer bone at the end of a spruce shaft and thrown onto bank. Great skill required to spear, throw eels onto bank. If not thrown very quickly, would escape into water again. Eels cleaned, split, cooked in cleft stick over low fire. Also roasted on hot rocks. Bulk of catch smoked, dried, packed in baskets for winter. Dried meat roasted on hot rocks until fat ran out. Flesh became soft before eaten.

For catching suckers, bullheads, trout, other small fish, used net about 3 ft. square held in riffles by two men, one at each end. Lower edge weighted with rocks. Ends and middle held open by willow sticks. Other men drove fish downstream into nets. Dip nets used for smelt, surf fish. Loop of human hair wound around index finger for angling trout. Loop tied at end of line, bait inserted into the opening. Sea fishing of minor importance. Used the baited deer-bone hook at end of line held in hand. Smelt smoked, dried, packed in baskets for winter. Surf fish sun dried without smoking, stored. Crabs caught with dip net into which bait had been placed. Net sunk down into water and left some hours before pulled. Cooked fresh, eaten as soon as cooked. Clams, mussels, shrimps, abalone stone-boiled, eaten immediately. Also dried, packed for winter with subsequent soaking, boiling. Devilfish netted, stone boiled. Seal and sea-lion teeth kept as medicine against rattlesnake bite. Sea urchins, called sea eggs, gathered, eaten raw or cooked on hot stones. Considered great delicacy, not saved for winter.

## MANUFACTURES

### Basketry

Bear River people were essentially a basket-making people like the central Californian tribes. Apparently all baskets were made in simple twining, but the old art has died out, and my informant has now forgotten the exact technique. However, as all questioning failed to reveal other recognizable methods, it seems justifiable to suppose that twining was the common technique.

The body of the tight baskets, such as eating, water, and cooking baskets, was always of smooth spruce roots with the overlay design of five-fingered fern stems. The more loosely made baskets had hazel-brush warps with spruce or willow-root fiber wefts. Water baskets, about the same size and shape as a modern water bucket, and small drinking baskets were identical in weaving technique to the other tight baskets.

New baskets filled with ashes, which rubbed into mesh. Ashes removed, inside scraped with mussel shell. Filled with water, allowed to stand overnight, washed with soaproot, fresh water. Large water containers had basketry lid, not treated with ashes. Circular tray baskets used for berrypicking, washing food, hand packing; more loosely made than same style basket used for washing eels, fish, eating. Various sizes, from very small spit basket used by shaman in curative dance to large, flat winnowing basket 3 or more feet in diameter. Loose baskets for storing dried meat, fish, seeds; about 3 ft. deep by 3 ft. in diameter at top, 2 ft. at bottom. Hoppers with flaring sides about 8 in. to 2 ft. in diameter, 10 in. to 2 ft. deep. Fitted over smooth or hollowed-out rock for pounding nuts, seeds.

Besides the small spit basket of the shaman, there were others slightly larger for washing out the mouth, and for individual eating baskets. Loosely woven basketry hats were worn by the women.

Carrying baskets (used by women only) had a wide strap of iris grass, woven over the under, with the ends of the strap braided where it was attached to the basket. The strap passed across the forehead, over the basketry hat. Men always bore packs in a net (shaped like modern shopping bag), with the buckskin thong across the chest, never forehead. Men made their own carrying nets as well as their own baskets for catching fish and eel, even though basket-making was strictly a feminine occupation.

Basketry cradles were of flat, split hazel brush, with a spruce root weft. A round basket attached at the top protected the baby's face from the sun. The first cradle always had a seat, but the second or larger one, used until the baby could walk, was without it.

#### Objects of Wood, Bone, and Stone

Implements of wood were few, although easily worked wood was plentiful. Canoes, rafts, paddles, platters, drinking cups, bows and arrows, rabbitskin frames, head scratchers, and shaman pipes were the only wooden implements made by the Bear River people.

Canoes were made from redwood floated downriver from Rainbow Ridge. The cut lengths were gouged out with an adz; when a sufficient number of chips had accumulated, they were laid in the cavity and set on fire and allowed to burn until the underneath was so charred that it could easily be dug out. When the required depth was reached, the bottom and ends were shaped on the outside and the vessel finished by inserting seats fore and aft. These vessels must have been at best crude, unstable affairs because frequent mention is made of their upsetting and the occupants drowning. My informant told me that "that was one of the reasons that all Indians had to be good swimmers." Canoes were used for setting fish and eel nets and baskets; spearing salmon; hunting seal and sea lion; and for ferrying.

The canoes had two to five paddlers, which indicates their large size. Whenever there was danger of capsizing, which was frequent, the boatmen slapped the boat on the side and spoke the name of a mythical boat believed to have been so seaworthy that speaking its name had power to prevent their boat from upsetting. People did not venture into the ocean except under the most favorable conditions.

Rafts of redwood logs lashed together with rawhide thongs were used to skirt the cliffs along the beach and to visit the near-by rocks for gathering eggs or young shags.

Paddles were made of oak, spruce, or other hardwood. They were first roughly shaped with an

elkhorn wedge and then whittled out with a flint knife. They had straight handles and a single blade rounded on the lower edge. According to my informant, "Paddles of any kind of tough wood would make the boat go." They were used for both canoes and rafts. Both kinds of craft were poled in shallow water.

Curved fir bark cut in lengths of about 2 ft. were used for meat platters. Drinking cups were cut from madroña wood. The limb was severed close to the tree and cut into short lengths. It was whittled out on the outside with a flint knife and the exterior ground with wet sand before the interior was hollowed. These cups served as drinking vessels or for receptacles in which leaves were crushed for making medicine. Gourds were used only after the advent of the white settlers.

The bow was of yew with small pieces of the same wood glued on the back as reinforcement.

Glue prepared from stewed fish heads. Bow whittled out with double-edged flint knife, polished with wet sand. Arrows made of snowball wood, point of sharp yew, flint. Point fastened to shaft by iris string covered with pitch. Arrow shafts straightened by repeatedly drawing between opposing stones, maker sighted down shaft. Polished with wet sand. Three split feathers applied at equidistant intervals, wrapped to shaft with iris string. Each man's arrows identified with mark.

Carved headscratchers for menstruating girls and for women after childbirth were made of ironwood (?) cut out with the flint knife and stained.

Long wooden pipes for female shamans were made of yew or dogwood, whittled out with a flint knife and ground smooth with sand. The opening was burned out, then shaped with a knife, and a ferrule of white, polished stone inserted in the large end. Short pipes, made exactly like the long ones, were used by male shamans. Wooden frames for making rabbitskin blankets were of young yew and consisted of four pieces, in the shape of a square, lashed at the corners.

Stone hammers, with no hafting, were used in wood work such as splitting boards for house construction, driving stakes, and so on. Shaped stones for mortars and stone pestles were employed for grinding seeds and nuts. Natural stones of the required size and shape were hollowed in their long axes for use as arrow straighteners. Stone sinkers, circled with a central shallow depression, were used as weights for line and net fishing. Flint knives, both single- and double-edged, were made by pressure chipping. They were used for whittling implements of wood; also as war weapons.

Implements of elk and deer horn, such as wedges, daggers, fishhooks, spear and harpoon points, spoons, etc., were in general use. Wedges, adzes, daggers, fishhooks, spear points were made from the front leg bone of deer or elk. The wedge was a triangular piece of bone ground to a point at one end. Daggers were various sizes, double-edged,

and sharp-pointed. The bone fishhook for ocean fishing was about 6 to 8 in. long, pointed at both ends, with the line tied in the middle.

Spear and harpoon points were about the same size as the arrowpoint, but they were used as barbs lashed to the end of a hazelwood shaft. They were attached at an acute angle, wrapped with iris string, and pitched with pine gum.

Elk horn spoons were made from the part of the antler where it branched from the head. They were first cut out, then ground on the outside before being polished on the inside, just as was done for wooden cups. The horn spoons were carved and used by men only. Women used the abalone-shell spoon, similarly made, although not carved. A mush stirrer of deer or elk horn was also carved and ornamented. Elk horn purses, from 6 to 7 in. long, had a flange at both ends and a half-inch slit along the concave surface of the horn. The edges of the slit were incised for a distance of about an inch. (Pl. 7e; mus. spec. 1-27140.)

#### Miscellaneous Manufactures

The Bear River people made quivers of several kinds of skin. Wildcat-skin quivers were used extensively for hunting small land animals. It was believed they made the hunter stealthy and sly in tracking and stalking. They could not be used for seal and sea-lion hunts because it was believed they brought rough water causing hunters to lose their game; or boats to break or capsize and the men to drown; or other catastrophes. Raccoon-skin quivers were used on these hunts because they were believed to bring good luck and smooth water.

Preparation of the skin for a quiver followed a stereotyped pattern. The only cuts made in it were around the neck and hocks. The whole skin was then inverted and tanned, leaving the tail and legs attached for ornamentation. When tanned, all openings were closed by sewing them with sinew. The neck was left open, the fur edge folded over, and the whole skin again turned with the hair outside. A rawhide thong was attached to the open end and the whole slung over the left shoulder.

Mats of tule about 3 ft. square were woven in checkerboard style with double wefts. They might be woven by any person who knew the technique and were said to be very warm. They were used only by the shaman during the curative ceremony.

Rope and string were made from white iris-grass fiber gathered from the mountains. It was cleaned, shredded, bleached in the sun, and the fibers then wet and twisted into strands by rolling on the thigh with the palm of the hand. Materials gathered and prepared by women. All rope and string made by men.

A flat, ground, abalone-shell teether for babies, about as large as an adult index finger, was perforated and tied to the infant's wrist.

Fire was made by drilling with an upright dry alder shaft on a hearth of dry redwood root. Dry grass, spongy wood, or tree moss was used for the tinder onto which the spark was dropped. The flame was fanned and blown into a blaze and transferred to dry grass and sticks.

#### Skin Dressing

All animal skins except seal and sea lion were dressed. The technique followed a stereotyped pattern. Men and women both knew the process and participated in the work; women did the tailoring.

Hides cut around neck under lower jaw. Slit down belly to tail on inside of legs to hocks; completely around the top of hoofs so that whole hide could be removed in one piece, leaving head, hoofs attached to carcass. Dehairing, hide soaked in solution of hot water, deer brains, thimbleberry shavings, hair removed with stone scraper, skin rolled tightly, left for two days. Unrolled, washed with soaproot, re-scraped, again rolled. Allowed to remain another 2, 3 days until fat, connective tissue decomposed; washed, scraped again. Hide wrung by attaching one end to tree, post, twisting other end through which stick was thrust. Skin pegged on ground, left to dry in sun. As soon as drying began, worked hide between hands, 2, 3 times a day until soft, pliable.

Dressing skin with hair on, used deer brains, thimbleberry shavings in solution of cold water. Skin soaked only once. Scraped off fat, connective tissue, washed thoroughly with soaproot. Dried in sun, worked with hands to soften.

#### Musical Instruments

Musical instruments were few and simple. Split sticks were used in the puberty dance ceremonies. They were about 3 ft. long, split to within 2 or 3 inches of the handle, and decorated with various vegetable stains. These instruments were struck across the hand as accompaniment to the dance songs. The drum was beaten during the small-sticks game. The drum frame consisted of a piece of white oak, 1/2 in. thick by 4 in. wide, bent into a circle while the wood was green and the perforated ends laced together with buckskin thongs. When the frame was thoroughly dry, a piece of wet deerskin was stretched over the head and bound down with buckskin and allowed to dry. Deer-hoof rattles and whistles were not used, although known from surrounding tribes.

#### MEASUREMENTS OF TIME; SEASONS; COUNTING

Three seasons only were recognized. No distinction was made between fall and winter.

Tiola'ntitiäk. (Summer. When grass is white.)

Naiha'ntá. (Winter. When leaves drop and rain comes.)

Nemtaiha'ia. (Spring. When leaves open.)

The day is divided as follows:

Tci'nta. (Daybreak. When the light comes.)

Dabinona. (Noon. Persons always motion upward when pronouncing the word.)

Gū'tklak. (After dark and through the night.)

Tci'nta. (Daybreak, and all through the day.)

Na'clagūtklak. (Last night.)

Ka'nta. (Yesterday.)

Naka'nta. (Day before yesterday.)

Naka'tevr. (Tomorrow.)

Near sundown and after sundown are other divisions of the day whose names Nora had forgotten.

Time reckoning usually referred to some event of importance which distinguished that year from all others.

Counting was done on the fingers, but Nora said that she did not learn to count in her own language and that she knew only the following numbers:

- 1, Tia'c
- 2, Nahka'
- 3, Dakha'
- 4, Tui'cka
- 5, Tci'lava'ntla
- 6, Ne'sian

Seven and 8 she did not know. She said that they counted by fives and tens, motioning with the open hand to indicate the number of fives within the spoken number. For 5, one hand upheld with the fingers spread; for 10, both hands flung up, backs outward and fingers spread; for 15, both hands were held as for 10, after which one hand added.

Directions were given by motioning. There were distinct names for them, including zenith and nadir, but Nora could not remember them.

#### WITCHCRAFT

Rattlesnake poison, with which people were "doped" and killed, came from rattlesnakes caught during July, August, or September (when they can see at what they are striking; other months they are said to be blind and will strike at anything they hear). The snake was hung by the head in the sun, or sometimes over a small fire, and the grease caught in a clam or abalone shell. The person making the poison then cut a stick and smoothed and sharpened one end. It must be smooth enough so that the grease would not go into the roughened wood and thus into the body of the manipulator and kill him. He then stirred the grease with the smooth stick and added to it the powdered skins of the rattlesnake, which had been shed in the spring, and weasels' toe nails. This mixture was then put into a kelp container. A drop of the mixture was placed in an elderwood pipe which had been fastened onto the end of a shaman's pipe. The person wishing to poison another then spoke the name of the intended victim and blew outward on the pipe. The poison was be-

lieved to go out of the pipe in a cloud of mist or smoke, and travel to the victim named, where it settled over him. The poison could see where it was going because the rattlesnakes were killed during their seeing months. One small drop was said to kill the person named in one year; two drops in two years, etc. The poisoner usually used more than two drops of the poison so that the victim's death would occur after a period of a few years and thus lessen the chance for discovery of him as the culprit. One large drop might kill a person named by the next day. One of the first indications that a person was poisoned was a roaring in the ears, like the sound of a rattlesnake. If one puts his ear to a sea shell he can hear a comparable noise; also said to be like the roaring of the ocean. This poison must be made exactly right or it would not work. Nora said that Sally Bell used to make it to sell, but later when Sally was questioned, she either did not know anything about it or pretended ignorance. Nora related the following story, also told by others:

"Mrs. P. put that kind of poison into oatmeal porridge which her grandson ate by mistake, not knowing it was meant for another person. He died from eating it. The poisoned porridge was set far back in the cupboard; the boy came home late and ate it. Mrs. P. was terribly upset when she found he had eaten it, and made a great rumpus with him about it. He died some two months afterward, but everyone knew she had that poison ready to give someone. Other doctors saw that that was what had happened to him."

A shaman who attempts to poison another person without reason runs the risk of having the sickness come onto his own family and kill them, even though the intended victim also was killed by the poison. If the shaman's victim has lived a blameless life, the poison does not affect him.

#### MEDICINE AND MEDICAL PRACTICES

There were three distinct methods of curing. The first and most important was the shamanistic curative dance, given only for very grave sickness of unknown origin; the second was practical herbalization; and the third, by magical medicines.

Care of the sick devolved on a child of the family or an old lady who had experience with sickness. The sick were never left alone and their wants were supplied whenever possible. They were isolated from the family as much as possible, and, to this end, special bedding and eating vessels were provided, both for their protection against contaminating influences and also for protection of the family against them. Children were kept away unless needed to fan away flies or to run errands.

In grave sicknesses of unknown origin, the patient was sung and danced over by the shaman, and the pains extracted (already described); in

lesser illnesses where the cause was known, such as in gunshot wounds, sores, etc., remedies were applied or given internally. Many herbs were used, but Nora has forgotten or is unable to find them because of the grazing of cattle and sheep and the plowing of the land has destroyed them.

All preventive medicines seem to be magical. Devilfish flesh was eaten for prevention of rattlesnake bite--rattlesnakes were supposed to run from the person who had eaten such flesh when young. For curing rattlesnake bite, the teeth of the devilfish were used to open the wound and allow the poison to escape. The wound was scratched and picked until it bled, then a rattlesnake button was burned and the ashes rubbed onto the bleeding flesh. Chicken-hawk feathers used for washing the bite were believed to increase the efficacy of the devilfish treatment.

A broken bone was treated by steaming the point of the break with yarrow all night. The next day the bone was bound up with steamed buckskin strips about 4 in. wide, which were allowed to dry into a tight, supporting cast. All steaming of medicine used for compresses was accomplished by heated white rocks which were kept by every family for such purpose only.

Wounds, such as arrow shots, knife wounds, gunshot wounds, etc., were washed with a chicken-hawk feather from the tail or wing of the bird, then compresses of chewed alder bark or yarrow were applied until the inflammation subsided.

Cuts were treated with chewed alder bark, which has therapeutic value because of the tannin ingredient; however, there seemed no recognition of this value, it being considered solely a magical medicine which had been derived from Coyote, the first one to chew and apply it to wounds. Other remedies for cuts and sores were: yarrow compresses; spiderweb, which was said to draw the poison from the wound, stop bleeding, and heal without inflammation setting in; burned kelp ashes, said to be very strong medicine, efficacious in healing. Sores and boils were opened with a flint sliver and squeezed out, then treated with burned kelp ashes or desiccated thimbleberry leaves, which were powdered and used as a compress to draw out the pus and heal the sore.

All kinds of throat troubles were treated with the same bear, seal, or whale oil which was eaten mixed with other food. Two or three drops of the oil were swallowed.

Teeth were never extracted, but were allowed to decay in the mouth. Toothache was treated with wet or steamed moss compresses on the outside of the jaw.

Fever patients were washed with soaproot tied in small bundles. They were also given a purge of young alder-bark infusion. This is an emetic, but, when it is swallowed and retained, a strong purge.

Stomach trouble was usually treated with an infusion of steeped yarrow. Children were rubbed

over the gastric region with the leaves of wild mint. Pains of a rheumatic nature and others which did not incapacitate the patient were also treated with steamed yarrow.

The sweat bath was used for any kind of fever, cold, or general ill feeling, unless it became acute, in which event shamanistic treatment was resorted to. The sweat house was used by all ailing members. They sweated and then swam in the river, returning to the sweat house to get warm again before going home. Sometimes they stayed all night. They never built a fire in the sweat house for the bath, but heated rocks outside and carried them in, then put spruce boughs on top of the rocks and poured water over to produce the steam.

Convalescence was hastened by washing the patient with soaproot, feeding with soft foods and broths, and quiet and rest. When a sick person requested gopher for food, it was interpreted as a very good sign for recovery. The family or friends got the gopher, usually by digging him out, and cooked him for the patient. If the family disregarded the patient's request and failed to obtain gopher for him, it was believed the patient would die.

#### MISCELLANEOUS BELIEFS

To the native mind there was nothing anomalous in attributing human traits to animals, or in ascribing activities to inanimate objects. The former spoke, and the latter possessed influence for good or evil. Origins and natural phenomena were also satisfactorily explained by these attributes.

When dogs talked they spoke the Indian language, and when a dog answered the person who spoke to it, that person soon died. There is a place on Eel river, called Natlsa'tat in the Bear River dialect and Na'xtax in Wiyot dialect, where both tribes say they could see little, hairless dogs in the pool. This pool is east of George Hanson's place, and about a mile west of the present town of Fortuna. The creek leading into Eel river formed the pool. It is now called Pumice creek. The pool has been destroyed by a shift in the Eel river and the dogs are gone, but in the olden times, they said, the little dogs came out of the pool and sunned themselves on the sticks. They were about 5 inches long and had no hairy covering. Young people were not allowed to look into that pool because there was danger that their babies would have hair growing on the shoulders.

There was another place near Morrison's ranch, on Bear river, where Indian dogs are said to have come out of a deep pool and stood on the bank. These dogs looked like coyotes and they always stood facing the sun. After the whites came they were supposed to have been such a disturbing influence that all the Indian dogs died.

The Bear River people say that there are people

living under all running water. They can hear them talking. These people have their own dogs and those were the ones that came out and stood on the river bank at Morrison's place. The under-the-water people they called Daxki'an. The shaman saw them when she traveled during a trance in her dreams, but common people only hear them talking.

All persons, especially shamans, starting on a journey must look back when some distance from home and say, "I am coming back this way," or they will never see their homes again. If they start traveling toward east, they must return by the same route, otherwise they may never reach home if they attempt to return a new way.

Rain is supposed to come from an underground lake. The clouds take it up; get full; then it rains.

Thunder and lightning are made by dead shamans' spirits. When both north and south thunder answer each other, there will be good weather; when one does not answer, inclement weather will result.

Good and bad places were known to all. Certain pools, rocks, and so forth, were believed to promote fertility in barren women; other places were believed to be beneficent to the visitor in various ways: promoted success in undertakings; or cured disease. On Morrison creek Nora found a round hollowed-out rock where water had collected. Her mother told her a person who washed his hands and face there would be lucky.

There are not many bad places on Bear river. Mountain Glen creek, running into Eel river is a bad creek. If people drink from it or wash the face in it, they will go blind. This side, north of Capetown, there is a bad rock that halloos like a person and that means that someone always gets killed. A chickenhawk's cry at that rock means the same thing. Two other rocks halloo like a person. This side of Capetown, one of them, the northern rock, is called Ts'enlit (the young woman who never lied). [The name of the southern rock Nora did not know.] Mohil rock, at Mattole, is the sister rock of the big rock at Crescent City beach, and, when small, high, fluffy clouds show in the sky, they talk to each other. The woman rock is always to the south, and the man is always to the north. Crescent City people know the story about these rocks. [Nora did not know it.]

Explanations of natural phenomena followed the general line of thought, drawn from the folk tales; such phenomena usually were attributed to supernatural causes. Nora related the following:

Ocean was on the east side first, and the land on the west side. That is why the hills look wavy and you find shells in the ground. The west land is the only place where the trees grow. The breakers came from the east and the water, too.

Earthquake is called Ninitu'ku, which means "shake ground." A mother makes her children get up and stand, so they will not fall through the earth. If they lie down, they will go through and

will not live more than two or three days. This standing up is called gowi'le and means "dodge earthquake."

Shape of the world they never talk about. They are afraid to talk about it. They do not want young people to know about that story. Only old people knew about it. I was too young (Nora said), I never learned that story, and I do not know why they don't want young people to know about it. Ages of people they don't talk about either. They don't like to mention ages. They only say when a person is old, but they don't say anything about that at other times.

All Indians swim in every lake they come to. First they put coals of fire on a small piece of wood and then put angelica root on the coals and set the piece of wood afloat. If the smoke rose straight up, it was a sign that the water was not bad water, so they swam.

Big spotted spider is never hurt because he told the woman to make a basket when flood was coming. When he comes down in front of a person he brings good luck.

Crow cawing early in the morning means in Indian language: "Hurry up, get up, company coming," and sure enough, company or friends will always come.

White Indians with curly hair used to be at Bucksport before the white people came. They had light skins and were big people, tall and good looking. My mother and father were big, light-skinned, curly-haired people.

## TALES

### Flood

Spider talked to a woman. He told her to make a big basket. She worked one year making that big basket. She made it wide at the bottom with a lid for the top and pitched it all over the outside. When the flood came the woman and her brother were saved in that basket. They put food in the basket and got in and closed the lid. They floated along and by and by the basket bumped and bumped. They did not know how long they were in the basket, but when they felt it bump and bump, the man said: "There must be land, must be rocks somewhere, open the lid and look." Then they felt the basket quiet and they looked out. They saw mud and coon tracks in the mud; they saw dove fly. They moved out of the basket and camped. The woman told the man to build a house because the rain began to fall. She said: "This house has a leaky roof." The man said, "Where?" and she did not answer him. He said, "I suppose that you want me to call you wife, then you will answer." She said, "Yes, that is what I want." So they lived together and had children and that is how people came on earth after the time of the flood. Everyone is related to that woman and that man. That is why the big, spotted-back spider is never killed, never harmed, and is thought to bring good luck.

Raven and Crow

Some people can understand crow language. Crow had a woman. She was Raven. They had a little boy. Raven put the baby in a basket. Crow went hunting deer and Raven took the baby basket and went hunting for mussels and seaweed. She set the baby down on the beach and began to hunt for mussels. Then she found sea eggs and they were so good that she ate sea eggs and ate sea eggs. She forgot all about the mussels and seaweed. The tide came up. She looked around; the baby basket was gone. She hunted and hunted for it and cried and cried. Her husband came back and found his wife gone. He looked for her and found her sitting behind a rock crying for the baby. The man looked and looked for the baby but could not find it. He said to the woman, "You've been eating sea eggs!" He whipped her with ironwood until she was all black and he killed her. His brother-in-law came along and the husband told him that he had killed his wife because she ate sea eggs and lost the baby. The brother-in-law whipped the husband until he turned black, and that's why raven and crow are black.

Origin of Abalone

A girl came from the south--came and stood a long way off from a man. He wanted to get her because she was covered with Indian money. He said to his grandmother, "How am I going to get that woman?" His grandmother said, "Sing a song to her and she will come to you." So the grandmother gave him a song and he sang it to the woman. His grandmother told him that he must be out hunting when the girl came. One day the grandmother heard shells on a dress and saw the girl coming. She shone all over with the abalone shell, she looked just like a rainbow. Then the man came home dressed in finery, dressed just like a hummingbird. He saw the girl was old and ugly, so he turned his back on her. She went away; went to the north, and his grandmother told the boy he did very wrong. The girl went a short distance and came to a creek where she changed back to a beautiful young woman. He saw her and followed her again, but she went away from him and said she would teach him a lesson. She told him she would not have treated him so if he had come so far for her. She went on and on. She stopped at Klamath river and he followed and caught up with her there on the left side of the river. He wanted her to go back with him but she said no. He said he would cut her up so that she would never be pretty again. She would not go back, so he cut her. He left then, and she went to Trinidad and washed the blood and her body came back beautiful again. That man saw her again and he wanted to get her. She came toward him and told him that she would not go back with him but that she would always leave abalone shell for him to see so that he should not come after her again.

Then she cried and sang a song. That love song is the oldest song the Bear River people have. After she came back to her family, her sister said, "What happened to you?" She said, "I've been all cut up. I'll never follow another man." The tiny abalone shells are the oldest girl's body. When she arrived home south, the man was already there. She would not marry him, but he stayed there with her and that is why abalone money stays at Trinidad and that is the reason women do not follow men but have the men follow the women. Abalone is found only where that girl stopped to swim when she traveled, and it is always rough because she was all cut up by that man.

[In all song stories, as well as in the regular tales, it is the grandmother who is important, and not the mother.]

Coyote and Spider

Coyote had a baby and put him in the sun. The sun was so hot that the baby died. Coyote stalked the sun every morning. He went up and up, hunting for the sun, and he wanted to get down. He saw everything at a distance under him. He did not know how to get down. He spit down and the spit fell and fell and fell and Coyote did not know how to get down that far. Spider came along. He told Coyote he would let him down with his rope if he would not look up and would not laugh. Spider let him down and down, but Coyote looked up and he laughed because Spider's behind looked so funny, you know how it works when he makes rope. Spider was angry and he drew him up, drew him up, drew him up. Coyote promised not to do it again, so Spider let him down again, but Coyote looked up again and he could not help but laugh because Spider looked so funny. Spider drew him up, drew him up, drew him up. He was angry. Coyote promised not to laugh again, so Spider let him down again. Coyote laughed again because Spider looked so funny. Spider broke the rope and Coyote fell and fell and fell down and hit the ground and broke all to pieces. He broke every bone. He was all mashed up. Two girls came along and said, "That looks like Coyote!" One kicked the bones and Coyote came to life again.

Coyote and Spider<sup>16</sup>

Spider, with the pretty yellow back, is the one who did something to Coyote. Coyote had a little boy in the sand. He put him in the hot sun and the little boy cooked. Coyote did not know what to do. He shot at the sun and he finally found himself up in the sky and did not know how to get down. He did not know what to do. He spit and the spit went so far he could not see it. He threw Indian pipe down. It looked so small. Spider came along and told him he would put him down if Coyote would not laugh at him and make fun of him. Coyote promised

<sup>16</sup>Second version by the same informant a year later.

that he would not laugh, but as he took hold of the web and looked back, he laughed at the rope coming out of the spider's behind. Spider drew the rope up and said, "I thought you promised not to laugh." Coyote said, "I could not help but laugh, you looked so funny." Spider let him down again. Coyote laughed again, and Spider again drew up the rope. Spider let him down the third time. Coyote laughed and Spider cut the rope and Coyote fell! Coyote flattened out on the ground and two girls picking huckleberries kicked him. Coyote said, "Yes, that's why I'm all mashed up." That is why they say spider's web is so good for medicine. Eel river people (Wiyot) don't use it, they think it is poison.

#### Coyote Stole the Sun

In olden times there was no sun. One day a lazy person came along, dragging along, dragging along. It was Coyote. People told him not to go to a certain place, but he went anyway. They did not know whether Coyote was a man or a woman. He took white clay and plastered it all over himself between his legs so he looked like a woman, then he put blackberry juice on himself to look like blood. They thought he was a menstruating girl, and they liked that girl and wanted to do right by her, so they put him in a house to train. They all went away to gather food for the dance they were going to give for that girl, and left a little girl to watch and see that she did right and did not look around. The sun was hanging up like a lamp in an old basket in the corner of the house. Coyote grabbed it and ran. He ran and ran and ran. They sent all fast runners to catch him. They sent bumblebee, hummingbird, hawk, and swallow after him, but they could not overtake him even when he dropped the sun. He dropped it many times, but they could not catch him. Fish ducks finally almost caught him, so he threw the sun against a rock and it broke all to pieces. Then it was light.

#### Coyote Stole the Sun<sup>17</sup>

Coyote traveled and traveled. There was no sun at all. He traveled north first, and he did not see the sun. He came back again. He went south and traveled. It got warmer. He dreamed about the sun. He wanted the sun. He tried to get it. He went over a bare mountain and came to a place where someone lived. [From this point the story is a repetition of the first version.]

#### Coyote's Gluttony

Coyote was traveling, he was everywhere. All people know him because he traveled so much. He started from a big rock on Bear river where his

grandmother lived. He traveled from there against his grandmother's will. He took young alder and stripped leaves off and ate or chewed it. He said he would always chew this alder when anyone shot him. He traveled east and came to a place where he dressed like a pretty woman; dressed in Indian money. A man wanted him because he thought Coyote was a woman. He wanted that woman but other men chased him off. Coyote went away again and did the same thing. They wanted to buy Coyote, but he escaped again. He tried to make a short cut through the mountains and came to a place where there were plenty of people. He was hungry. He saw Indian potatoes but he did not bother them. He went fishing and had plenty to eat. He saw more Indian potatoes but he did not bother them. He came to an old lady's house. He was very thirsty and asked for water. She said, "There is water." He said, "I want fresh water," so the old lady went to get water and while she was away he ate all the Indian potatoes stored in the basket. She came back, but he did not drink the water. He went. She found the basket empty of potatoes. She said, "For that you are going to pay by going crazy for water." She said, "I know that you are Coyote now." He became terribly thirsty while he traveled. He saw a creek. He ran toward it but the creek receded from him. He threw an alder stick into it, but the stick came out dry. He went on and met another old lady making a basket. He asked for water. She said, "I have a well in there." Then she told frog to jump aside and there was a well under him. Coyote took a cup and tried to drink but that did not work well, so he crawled into the well and drank and drank. He drank so much he swelled up and burst but he still drank. Timber, stumps, and everything went through him and caused a freshet. He did not know about this until a big water dog came along. He saw it and closed his mouth. The water dog said, "Now are you satisfied? I should go through you and fix you up. Whenever you see water near a spring, that's my water." Coyote raised up but felt that his behind was all torn out by the timber and logs that had passed through him, so he talked to his tail and his testicles and said, "What am I going to do now?" The tail and testicles said, "That's what you get for stealing the old lady's potatoes," but the tail finally doctored him and fixed him and he was able to excrete again, whereupon he addressed the excrement and said he was going on. The excreta said, "No, I cannot go with you, I have to stay here until I grow potatoes again." Then Coyote went and the excreta said to him, "Every freshet on every creek and river will take all of the timber out." Later the people shot at Coyote for what he had done.

#### Coyote Stole a Woman

Coyote came to another place and saw a young girl and wanted her. He went to the river to swim. They were going to have a big Indian dance there.

<sup>17</sup>Second version given following year.

Coyote Raped His Grandmother

He wanted to see the dance and help with the singing. He dressed like an old man and went to the dance, arriving last. When he came in, they told him he must sing. When he got up to sing, he was young-looking again. He went and leaned against a wide board and began to kick it to begin his song. He sang well. More and more people came until they pushed the walls of the house out. They wanted to hear him sing. He stopped singing and wanted to rest and have the remainder of the people sing. That pretty woman he wanted never looked at him. He went to the river to swim, went to another place. He thought about that girl. They told him they were going to have a big dance again, so he went back like an old man again. He said, "I saw a nice-looking young man here singing." People said, "Yes, he was a good singer, we will go after him to sing again." So Coyote said; "Let me go ask him." So Coyote dressed himself like a pretty girl and went there. They made a bigger house for the dance, so Coyote changed himself back into a good-looking young man and sang again, everyone could hear him and at last he cried. His tail, his ears, his foot, and his excreta helped him sing. Everyone felt good about his singing, so the girl he wanted stepped toward the door and Coyote took her and went home to his grandmother. They chased him, they shot at him, but he chewed alder and cured the wounds. He told his grandmother he had brought home a woman. She said, "You stole her and now we will have war." He said, "Grandmother, hurry and feed us." So grandmother said that she had no food but field mice and asked the girl if Coyote bought her. The girl said, "No, I thought he was a rich man, but he must be Coyote." Coyote said, "I sang for you, that is how I paid for you." When night came he told her to go to bed. The girl did not want to eat field mice. When daylight came she noticed that Coyote was gone. She followed him and saw him jumping after June bugs, so she knew that it was Coyote. She went back and hid behind a log and then went back to the house and put logs in the bed and covered them over with the covers and went back to her own people. Coyote started to cry because he thought she had turned into a log, but the old grandmother said that it was because he had not fed her right. Coyote asked his tail, and the tail told him that that was right. He followed her and overtook her when she was nearly home. She told him that he was Coyote and said she could not eat his food, so Coyote got ashamed and curled up and started for home. That is why Coyote hobbles when he runs. He told his grandmother he was going to make an arrow out of his shin bone and go back the next year to get that woman back. Grandmother said, "No, don't do that, you must use deer bone." Coyote put his own leg on a rock and hit it and broke the bone. He suffered and suffered and rolled around, but when it healed he was small and thin in the legs and went half crippled. He did not get that woman back.

Grandmother told Coyote to go out and hunt fawn. He went away and he saw new Indian potatoes. He stopped and asked his testicles if he should go back and tell his grandmother there were plenty of potatoes and take her back there with the digging stick so he could catch her and rape her. His testicles told him that he could do that, so he went back and told her there were many new potatoes. She took her digging stick and went with him and began digging. Coyote said, "Dig down deeper." So she dug deeper and deeper until her behind stuck up out of the ground. Coyote then grabbed her and stuck her head down in the sand so she could not see and he copulated with her. Then he ran so she could not see who did it, but she knew it was Coyote. She called out, "I know you now, you are Coyote." He said, "No, grandmother, I did not do that to you. I'm going to ask my testicles and penis if I did that to you and they will tell you." So he sat down and asked his testicles and they did not answer, so he asked his penis and it said, "Yes, that is what you asked me." Grandmother said, "I knew that, I know it now. It is a good thing that I'm an old woman or I would be having lots of little coyotes." She quit digging and went home. Coyote was so angry at his penis for telling on him that he was going to mash it on a rock. He sat down and started to hit it with a rock, but the penis drew back. Coyote pulled it out again and tried to hit it again, but it pulled back every time and Coyote never succeeded in mashing it.

Flight of Geese

Goose came from the north to see his wife, but she could not go back north with him because she was going to have a baby. She never did go north with him because he did not pay enough for her, and she had to stay in the south to raise little geese. He goes north to see his people and stays all winter. He takes the little geese with him but always goes back south in the spring to his woman.

Magic Boat

There were many people, strangers, living among the Bear River people and speaking their language. They lived with the Wiyot too. They were very small people who looked exactly like the Bear River people. They left in a boat from Eureka Bay at Humboldt Point, and they never came back. No one knows where they went. Eel River and Mad River people know this too. We do not know why they went away nor where they went. They had that good boat I was telling you about. It was not an Indian boat, and it would never, never tip over. Once ten people went out hunting sea lion and they caught seal and it took them out too far so they cut the rope and then waited for daylight to come. They came across

a big place where seaweed was thick; something raised up twice, they thought it was a snake. They pulled the boat off the seaweed barrier and went north. They looked back and saw the snake standing up out of the water like a tree in the sky. It then fell over toward the boat but missed it. The people came back safely. Later they used that same boat to go away in. They went away for good. This was long before the whites came. The Indians saw that same kind of a boat come in near Humboldt Point, but they went out again. They say that it was the very same boat. That boat was so good it could not tip over when they went on the ocean. If a man was going to tip over, he slapped his boat on the side and spoke the name of that good boat and that always saved them. That boat's name was Ca'dahoh in the Eel River language and Juntu'nus in the Bear River language. All of the little sea gulls left at the same time as the small people. These little sea gulls did not like good-looking people and killed them off. After they left with the little people, there commenced to be good-looking people again, light-colored people like the people at Bucksport and Davis creek. They were all big, tall men, especially the Davis creek people, but they were mean. They did not use arrows, knives, or sticks to kill people, but broke necks and bones with their hands.

#### Wild Men

Mothers always warned their children to stay close to camp so the wild men would not catch them. He catches women, young women, not married women, and little children. Wild women catch young, unmarried men. They lost one girl that way, that is how they knew about it. She went down to the river to swim and did not come back. They looked and saw where she came out of the water and put on her clothes, but they could not find her tracks back to camp. Old people thought that she was killed. They were sick about it. Toward morning the old lady was crying over losing the girl and they were all just going to wash faces in the river after crying, when they heard someone call, "Mother, father!" Other people heard it too. That lost girl came back, the shells all off her dress. She came back and said that a little man snatched and took her away. As they went along she dropped shells off her dress. That little man stunk. He went to hunt. He packed a big deer and cut it up and cooked for her. She would not eat it. She asked him how he killed the deer and he told her that he shot it with poison, that is why he cut out part of the deer. That night he laid his poison bone down and she stole it and pointed it at his mother and at him and then put it back where she found it. They both had headaches for the first time and laid down and died. She followed her shells back to camp. She lived to be an old, old lady.

#### Little Black Devils

One time an old maid stayed alone while her family went hunting weeds. She told her people when they came home that she heard someone around the house, heard someone whistle. She said that she felt afraid but they thought that she was too old to take. That night she lay down in front of the fire in the brush camp. It was moonlight. She slept soundly and when she woke she felt as if there was a shadow on top of her. She tried to get hold of it. She cried out and said that it was like a man. The shadow came and put his head between her knees and carried her away, head dragging. A man saw him and shot him through the middle; he dropped the woman and went. They brought her back to camp in a faint. Men took arrows and hunted him but they found only blood drops. The woman was middle-aged and she did not want to get married but her mother saw that she was pregnant. The woman said she did not know who made her that way unless it was that man. They got two or three Indian doctors who danced and sang. The doctors said that she had been having intercourse with that devil for a long time and that he was now coming after her because she was going to have a baby. She disappeared for about four years, then came back and told the people to put out salmon eggs. She said that that was the only thing her children could eat. Later the people killed the child and the father. The woman's mother told her to go back to where she had been because her children were going to be devils like their father. She went back then and they never saw her again, but sometimes they hear her children crying in the night and they then go out and hang salmon eggs on the tree limbs. In the morning the eggs are always gone. If a man or woman tells on these black devils they have been living with, they will always die. These small people are coal black and they stink. They live in the woods. White people never caught them, but now the timber is all gone and they have gone farther back. They take babies, too; that's why they never leave babies alone. It isn't good for unmarried women to sleep on the back on that account. They never take married women.

#### Origin of Shamans

A woman had a boy and they started for Klamath river--a wicked place. The boy was very sick. She rolled him up in a deerskin and started traveling. She stopped first at a house at Orrick and said, "I came to get my boy doctored; is there anyone here?" They said, "No, go to the next place south of here." She went to the next creek and there they told her to go on to the next creek, so she went to the third creek. When she got there, they told her to go on to the next creek, which is called Little River. At Little River they sent her on to Mad river; the Mad River people sent her

on to Eureka bay, which was the seventh place she stopped. From Eureka bay they sent her to Eel river and from Eel river they directed her to a small lake at Centerville. There they told her that they had never had a doctor, so she took the sick boy out from under her arm and held him up for the people to see. She said, "We never had a doctor, so you see this boy is going to sing and be a doctor." He stood up. He was as thin as a cane and he told the people that he would leave his body for the new doctors and would return his spirit into the cane of hazelwood, yew, or young pine which was to be used for curing sick people. He promised that he would give power to the new doctor through the use of the cane which was his body. He left his body in the water of the lake and went up to the sky. He went first through lightning, then through thunder, then through low, middle, and blue clouds to the sun and moon. The sun and moon are like man and woman. The clouds are his clothes; the lightning makes his fire and the thunder rolls when he goes up to the sky. After he doctored he used his hands and a pipe to cure with. The pipe was used first, and then, after the cane of his body is used to get the power from the sick boy, the hands. His spirit comes back into the cane to help the doctor get power.

#### Origin of Indian Dogs

A long time ago Indians had no dogs. They could not shoot deer and get them, but must set snares and chase them. One time a younger brother told his older brother that he would go hunting with him. The older brother said, "No, you're too young," but the younger brother went along in spite of him. The younger brother went to sit down, and the older brother said he was going to sit too. Younger brother said he was going to be a dog and for older brother not to be surprised if he heard a dog bark. Younger brother went and ate older brother's excrement and turned into a dog. He chased deer and caught him. Other people said, "What is that?" They did not know dog. Older brother tried to tell them what it was but only cried. Older brother told his wife to make a big basket and to feed the dog outside. The wife asked him where his younger brother was and the older brother told her he had turned into a dog. That dog left for two or three months. He could not talk any more, just shook himself all over when he saw his older brother. He went away again and brought two dogs home with him from where he had been with Coyote. He had mated with Coyote and from then on Indians had dogs. That's what makes dogs so smart. Indians buy dogs. They pay good money for them because they are so smart. They pay maybe one boat or one string of Indian money for them.

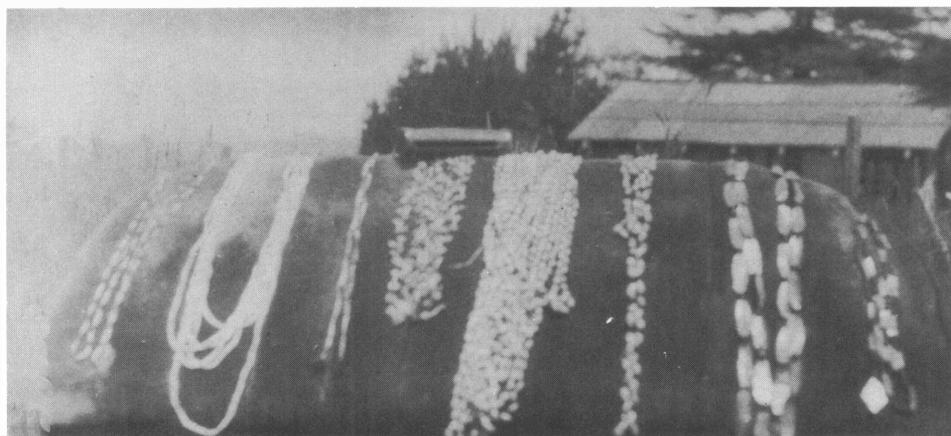
#### BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ABBREVIATIONS USED

- CNAE Contributions to North American Ethnology.  
 UC-PAAE University of California, Publications in American Archaeology and Ethnology.

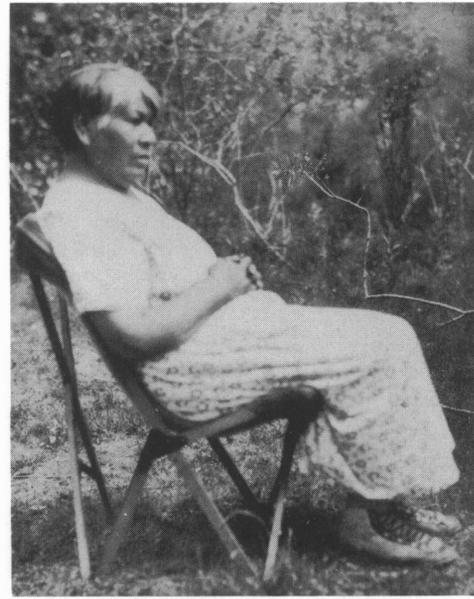
#### EXPLANATION OF PLATES

Plate 7. a, b, upper Bear River territory. c, mouth of Bear River. d, domed rock on the coast in southern Bear River territory. e, elk-horn purse (mus. spec. 1-27140), olivella and ground abalone shell beads.

Plate 8. Nora Coonskin, last Bear River informant and shaman, since died (Dec. 22, 1935). a, shaman's headdress, beads, eagle feathers and staff. b, elkhide belt for extracting pains in the curative ceremony (mus. spec. 1-27141). c, smoking the shaman's tubular pipe. d, side view of informant.



Habitat views; elkhorn purse and shell beads.



Shaman (informant) and her paraphernalia.