Batchelor

THE NISENAN

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NISENAN GEOGRAPHY

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by

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Contents

	Page
Introduction	1
Country	4
Boundaries	7
People	11
Settlements	13
Subsistence	16
Ownership	22
Trade	24
Names of Settlements and Place Names	25
Pleasant Valley, El Dorado County	26
Placerville, El Dorado County	28
Auburn-Colfax, Placer County	33
Nevada City, Nevada, Sierra, and Yuba Counties	38
Northwestern Maidu	44

J -- Henry Thompson. About 78 years old. Full blood. Born in Yuba County. Lives at Stanfield Hill, Oregon House, P.O., Yuba County.

No informants were said to be living in Brownsville or Challenge, Yuba County.

Northwestern Maidu Informants

K -- Henry Flynn. About 70 years old. Born at Bald Rocks, near Berry Creek, Butte County. Is head man of the group of Indians living in the vicinity of Berry Creek. Lives at Bald Rocks. Full blood.

L -- Harry Edwards. About 78 years old. Born at Concow, Butte County. Full blood. Lives on French Creek, about eight miles from Stanwood, Butte County.

COUNTRY

The territory occupied by the Nisenan lies in north-central California, east of the Sacramento River and west of the crest of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. The northern and the southern limits may be roughly stated as the Yuba and the Cosumnes Rivers, respectively. The matter of boundaries will be treated more specifically in a section devoted to that topic.

Taken from north to south, the country is relatively homogeneous but, from west to east, it rises from a few feet above sea level in the Sacramento Valley to altitudes of 7,000 feet or more in the high Sierra. In the mountains, the North, Middle, and South Forks of the Yuba River, and the Bear River, both of which join the Feather in its course through the valley, the North, Middle, and South Forks of the American River, which flows into the Sacramento, and the different branches of the Cosumnès, the lower course of which is outside of Nisenan territory, have all cut steep-walled, rugged canyons which form natural barriers to easy communication. These "large rivers, emerging from the Sierra Nevada and flowing across the plains to the main arteries in the center of the valley have built up alluvial deltas or have covered the plains with strata of the finest loam. The broad alluvial banks of these streams are often higher than the country lying behind them, particularly towards the foothills, and support open groves of Valley Oak and Interior Live Oak."[1]

According to C. Hart Merriam's classification of life zones,[2] the Sacramento Valley, from altitudes of 10 to 500 feet, belongs to the Valley Sonoran. This is a grassland formation and contains scattered groves of oak. The herbaceous vegetation is said to have reached a very rank growth in aboriginal days, and the land was burned over usually every year by the Indians. According to Jepson, these annual fires were sufficient to destroy seedlings, but they did little injury to established trees which, on the plains proper, were always of two species, the valley oak, called water oak, white oak, and mush oak by the settlers, and interior live oak. "These species when once established were well adapted by their thick bark to withstand grass fires, while their scattered method of growth, so characteristic everywhere in the Great Valley, is undoubtedly the result of repeated annual fires."[3]

Above the zone just described lies the Upper Sonoran Zone, extending from 500 to 4,000 feet. This Merriam divides into the lower foothill belt, 500 to 1,000 feet, the characteristic vegetation of which consists of grasses and herbs, including many members of the lily family, oak, and digger pine, and the chaparral belt, which extends from 1,000 to 4,000 feet.

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[1]Willis Linn Jepson, The Silva of California, Mem. of the Univ. Calif., vol. 2, The University Press, Berkeley, 1910, page 10.

[2]Willis Linn Jepson, A Manual of the Flowering Plants of California.

[3]Jepson, Silva, 11.

The chaparral belt is the area in which most of the field work was done upon which this paper is based. It is an area of extensive brush, some of which grows to tree size giving the appearance of a small forest. It flourishes on well-drained slopes and gravelly ridges and consists of several varieties of buckbrush and manzanita; also, coffee berry, Christmas berry, poison oak, bush poppy, and flannel bush, characterized by Merriam as a fire-type formation. In this belt are also many species of sedges, rushes, lilies, and other forms of herbaceous growth. Oaks grow there in abundance, including white oak, live oak, scrub oak and, in the higher altitudes, black oak. Digger pine is found in large numbers in the arid foothills, while higher up there are stands of yellow pine, sugar pine, hemlock, spruce, fir, and cedar. Buckeye, madrone, dogwood, hazel and, in the higher elevations, though less extensively, yew, ash, and maple are important trees of this belt from the standpoint of use by the Indians. The streams in the chaparral belt, as well as in the valley and in the foothills, are lined with cottonwoods, sycamores, elders, Oregon ash, red, black, and yellow willow, and other trees. At the higher altitudes, many kinds of berries and fruits grow in abundance.

Above and to the east of the Sonoran Zone lies the Sierra Transition Zone, extending to an elevation of about 5,000 feet. This is an area of large forests, the dominant trees being yellow pine, sugar pine, white fir, and incense cedar. The Big Tree, _Sequoia gigantea_, is also a native of the Transition Zone, which has, moreover, a large population of herbs and shrubs. On the more open forest or forestless slopes are found hazel, dogwood, green manzanita, gooseberry, currant, June berry, tobacco brush, and other varieties which are important in the list of plants used by the Nisenan.

Above the Transition Zone, the Canadian Life Zone takes in an ill-defined area between 5,000 and 7,000 feet. Its dominant trees are red fir, silver pine, Jeffrey pine, and tamarac pine, while pine-mat manzanita and wild plum are among its important shrubs. The last two zones mentioned are areas which were not used by the Nisenan for permanent settlement for reasons given elsewhere. They are important, however, as the regions where hunting, fishing, and gathering was carried on during the summer and fall, and their flora and fauna supplied a large part of the subsistence of the people.

Game of all kinds was far more plentiful in the days before the coming of the White man than it is at present. In former times, elk and antelope roamed the Sacramento Valley where there are none today. Deer also were in the valley to some extent, but they existed in greater numbers in the foothills and the mountains. Larger and more ferocious animals lived and were hunted in the mountains. These included the grizzly, black and cinnamon bear, the California mountain lion, and the wildcat. Smaller animals, such as fox, jackrabbit, rabbit, squirrel, chipmunk, badger, skunk, wood rat, and mice abounded all over the area, particularly in the foothills. Even insects of which there were many varieties, such as grasshoppers, hornets, yellowjackets, and ants, were utilized as food by the Nisenan.

At certain seasons of the year, game birds were abundant and were caught in snares or nets or hunted with the bow and arrow. The most sought after of such birds were quail, dove, duck, geese, crane, and pigeon. Crows, owls, woodpeckers, jays, yellowhammers, and other smaller birds were also important in the life of the Indians.

Although there are no lakes, except in the extreme northeastern portion of the territory, the many creeks and streams which flow into the large rivers, and the rivers themselves, furnished many varieties of fish. Salmon were taken in considerable numbers from the lower courses of the large streams, while suckers, pike, trout, eels, and perch were fished for in the creeks and smaller rivers higher up in the foothills and mountains.

The land occupied by the Nisenan thus furnished them everything which they needed for their existence except certain articles such as disc beads and shells, which were used as money, obsidian, used in making knives and arrow points, and the like. This does not mean, however, that there was an abundance in all parts of the territory at all times. In some years, acorns might be scarce in one section or game in another, due to climatic or other reasons. Often, one group of Indians or another would be faced with famine and, in such cases, they would be forced to depend upon the generosity of their neighbors to tide them over the bad times.

Climatic conditions vary considerably as one proceeds eastward from the valley floor to the higher altitudes of the Sierra. In the Sacramento Valley and foothills, there are only two seasons, the rainy season, lasting from November to April, and the dry season, from May to October. During the dry season, the temperature ranges from 60° to 110°, while in the wet season, it ranges from 33° to 75° with an average rainfall of 10 to 20 inches.[4] This naturally makes for a hot, arid summer condition in these areas, with the springs and creeks either very low or dried up completely, a condition which influenced the summer movements of the Indians as will be shown in another section. With the increase in elevation, the rainfall increases and, of course, the temperature decreases, so that at 5,000 feet, the former averages 25 to 35 inches and the latter, 55° to 60°. Above and even below this elevation, snow remains on the ground all winter, and the winters are cold and unsuited for permanent habitation.

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[4]Jepson, Silva, 12.

BOUNDARIES

To determine accurately what was once Nisenan territory and where it bordered upon lands belonging to other tribes is by no means an easy task, and much still remains to be learned upon this question. The ignorance of the old Indians as to conditions more than 20 or 25 miles from the place of their habitation makes the information given by those living in the interior portions of the territory very unreliable and, in many places along the former boundary, particularly in the Sacramento Valley and in the north, there are no old Indians living at the present time. The following data as to boundaries has, therefore, been compiled from statements made by various informants and from the results of earlier field work done in the area.

The dividing line of the Nisenan toward the Maidu on the north is not so easily marked as it is elsewhere because the differences in language and customs are not so great as they are between the Nisenan and other tribes. Powers groups together all the mountain Indians from the Bear River to the Cosumnes as a separate nation. He bases his grouping upon the different names used by the two peoples in designating themselves, by the criterion of numerals, by the fact that "south of Bear River, the tribes are designated almost entirely by the points of the compass, while north of it they have fixed names" and, also, because "the customs of the Nishinam are different from those of the Maidu in important respects, and especially in that very few of the former observe the great annual dance for the dead".[1]

Powers is undoubtedly correct in his reasons for grouping the Nisenan and the Maidu as distinct tribes, but it would seem that he has placed the boundary too far south. Nevada City lies north of the Bear River and yet the Indians living about there called themselves Nisenan, and their language and customs were similar to those of the people living to the south. The informant in Auburn (E) said that he could understand the speech of the Indians living as far away as Mooretown, which is on the ridge between the South and the Middle Forks of the Feather River, but that the Mooretown people called themselves Maidu, and he could not understand their language.

According to another informant living in Nevada City (I), Challenge, Yuba County, was formerly the home of Indians who spoke a mixed language, partly like that of the Mooretown people (Northwestern Maidu[2]) and partly like that of the Indians living around Nevada City. Challenge is situated at an elevation of 2,500 feet between the North Fork of the Yuba River and South Honcut Creek. Strawberry Valley, in Yuba County, north of the North Fork of the Yuba River where it flows westward, was also a place where a mixed language was spoken, but the Indians who lived there were said by informants (I and J) to have been of the same people as those living at Enterprise and Mooretown, Butte County, both of which are north of the South Fork of the Feather River.

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[1]Powers, Tribes of California, 313-314, 1877.

[2]Dixon.

The informant (J) living at Stanfield Hill, Yuba County, elevation 1,200 feet, and born in that county, said that he spoke the same language as the Indians living from Nevada City to Auburn. The Mooretown and Enterprise people, he said, spoke quite differently, although he was able to understand them. He seemed to think that in that particular locality, South Honcut Creek was the dividing line between the Nisenan and the Northwestern Maidu, although for several miles on both sides there was a mixture of the two groups as indicated by language and customs.

South Honcut Creek flows westward and joins the main stream of the Feather River about ten miles above Yuba City. Kroeber[3] states that the boundary between the Northwestern Maidu and the Nisenan in the foothills was where the south, middle, north, and west branches of the Feather River converge. It is more likely that the actual dividing line was the ridge south of the South Fork of the Feather River, between that stream and South Honcut Creek, for the South Fork has a very deep, steep-walled canyon which might easily serve as a natural barrier to the people living on either side of it. From this ridge, the line probably extended in a southwesterly direction to the Feather River somewhere between Oroville and South Honcut Creek.

Eastward of the point where the South Fork of the Feather and the North Fork of the Yuba River are in closest proximity, the northern boundary of the Nisenan becomes even more difficult to determine because as the elevation increases, there were fewer and fewer permanent camps. Downieville, on the North Fork of the Yuba River, elevation 3,000 feet, is, according to a Nevada City informant (I), in a region where there were only temporary camps for hunting, fishing, and gathering in the summer. Still further to the northeast, according to the same informant, Gold Lake, and other lakes where the elevation is in the neighborhood of 7,000 feet, were visited only by the Washo in the summertime. Consequently, the northern limits of the Nisenan, east of Strawberry Valley, were probably the ridge north of the North Fork of the Yuba River and between that stream and Canyon Creek in Sierra County. East and north of Downieville, there was a mixture of Nisenan, Maidu, and Washo. The Nevada City informant (I) said that no Indians ever lived around La Porte, Plumas County, which is on the ridge south of the South Fork of the Feather River, but that it was a hunting ground for the Maidu.

The eastern boundary of the Nisenan territory, according to the El Dorado informant (C), was the line in the Sierra Nevada Mountains where the snow lay on the ground all winter. Inasmuch as there were no permanent settlements much above 3,000 feet, the area higher up in the mountains was used only for hunting, fishing, and gathering, and its limits were not always determined exactly. Between the Nisenan and the Washo, there was a sort of 'no-man's land' in which the two tribes frequently met and fought on hunting expeditions, although it was said that with some groups of the Washo the Nisenan were friendly.

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[3]Kroeber, Handbook, 392.

None of the informants interviewed had any knowledge of the western limits of the Nisenan except that they could not understand the language west of the Sacramento River. These were undoubtedly, as Kroeber[4] states, the Sacramento River as far as or a little beyond the mouth of the Feather and, from that point north, the main stream of the Feather River to where the Nisenan join with the Northwestern Maidu. The Wintun owned the marsh and slough area on both sides of the Sacramento north of the mouth of the Feather.

Informants were quite definite as to the southern boundary. Sly Park, El Dorado County, elevation 3,300 feet, and the country to the east were where the Indians who lived in Pleasant Valley, El Dorado County, went for the summer, according to the Placerville informant (A). Sly Park is about 15 miles east of Placerville, between Sly Park Creek and Clear Creek, both of which flow in a general southwesterly direction to join the North Fork of the Cosumnes River. This same informant called the Pleasant Valley people Kor ni (Miwok) and said that he could not understand their speech. The vocabulary obtained from the Pleasant Valley informant (D) was entirely different from that obtained from informants in and about Placerville and to the north. So, it would seem that in the mountains the boundary between the Nisenan and the Miwok lay along the streams flowing southwest into the North Fork of the Cosumnes River, possibly Camp Creek or Sly Park Creek, or the North Fork itself. Fair Play, Indian Diggings, and other White settlements in El Dorado County, between the North and the South Forks of the Cosumnes, were said to be in Miwok territory.

The Placerville informant (A) said that his people did not extend any further south than Pleasant Valley, which is about three miles north of the North Fork of the Cosumnes, or than Nashville, which is on the North Fork where that stream flows directly south. Since there was considerable intermarriage along the border, the Indians living around Pleasant Valley and Nashville were probably both Miwok and Nisenan. The El Dorado informant (C) stated that the territory of the Kor ni, or Miwok, began just south of Huse Bridge, which is about four miles south of Nashville and just below where the branches of the Consumnes are all united in the main stream. Latrobe is definitely in Nisenan territory.

Kroeber has the southern boundary drawn along the Middle Fork of the Cosumnes or the divide between some two of the forks.[5] Although the distances between the forks are not very great, it would seem from the statements made by the various informants that this line has been drawn a little too far south and that the Miwok, in the foothills at least, held the territory as far north as the North Fork. The main stream of the Cosumnes, where it leaves the foothills, was doubtless the boundary between the two tribes for a short distance, but Kroeber is probably correct when he says that the boundary left the river where it swings south and cut in a westerly direction across to the

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[4]Kroeber, Handbook, 392.

[5]Kroeber, Handbook, 392.

Sacramento.[6] Powers' statement, "as to the southern boundary of the Nishenan there is no doubt, for at the Cosumnes the language changes abruptly and totally"[7] is in the main correct, but it leaves some doubt as to the actual location of that boundary both in the valley and in the mountains.

To determine, within the Nisenan territory, the exact areas occupied by the different groups which were designated by the points of the compass is almost impossible except in one or two cases, and even then the statements given by informants are often conflicting. The El Dorado informant (C) said that his group extended as far north as Georgetown, El Dorado County, where it joined with the Tocimnan, or "northerners". South of the North Fork of the Consumes were the Kor ni, and west and southwest of Latrobe, elevation 700 feet, was the country occupied by the Tai nan, or western people. Since Georgetown is about seven miles south of the Middle Fork of the American River, the group of the Nisenan whose center was at Placerville may, thus, be said to have occupied the area bounded by that river on the north, the Cosumnes on the south, the Sierra on the east, and the contour averaging 700 to 1,000 feet on the west.

According to the Clipper Gap informant (F) and her husband, the group whose center of influence was at Auburn spoke slightly differently and considered themselves distinct from the Nisenan living south of the Middle Fork of the American River, and also from the group north of the Bear, where the center of influence was at Nevada City and Grass Valley. The Auburn informant (E) said that the country as far west as Rocklin and Roseville, in the Sacramento Valley, was occupied by Nisenan related to the Auburn group, and that the big salt spring where Lincoln now stands was controlled by his people. While the Indians south of the Middle Fork of the American River and north of the Bear seem to have been distinct groups from that centering around Auburn, the head men of the latter group exercised considerable influence as far south as Placerville and as far north as Nevada City. This fact is substantiated in Beal's manuscript.

A third group centered around Nevada City, with territory extending as far south as the Bear River, west to Smartsville, elevation 600 feet, Browns Valley and South Honcut Creek, and east to the Sierra. Whether the area controlled by this group reached as far north as the southern boundary of the Maidu could not be ascertained, since there are no reliable informants now living north of Nevada City. Nevertheless, it seems probable that the Nevada City group exercised influence over all the land north to the northern boundary of the Nisenan.

It would seem from the above that the various large groups of the Nisenan, distinct from each other by only slight dialectic and cultural differences, had as their boundaries the deep, steep-walled canyons of the large rivers.[8] How the Valley Nisenan were divided, if at all, could not be ascertained.[8]

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[6]Kroeber, Handbook, 392.

[7]Powers, Tribes of Calif., 314.

[8]Cf. Kroeber, UPAAE, vol. 24:255-259, 1929.

PEOPLE

The Nisenan were not a tribe in the strict sense of the term. The unit was the local group which occupied a single village site or two or more adjacent sites. Political unity was, however, only nominal. The chief unifying factor was the language which, aside from slight dialectic differences, was the same throughout the entire area. There was a general cultural pattern, but there were decided distinctions between the cultural traits of the Indians living in the valley and those who occupied the hills and mountains. These distinctions were particularly evident in traits which were related to sustenance and to habitation; traits, in other words, which were determined by the physiography of the territory.

The relationship between the different villages was on the whole a friendly one. People living in one village were usually connected by blood or by affinity with members of other groups, for marriage, though not regulated, took place more often outside a village than within it. When relationships became strained to the point of warfare between groups of the Nisenan, the cause was generally a dispute over some woman or the perpetration of evil magic by a shaman of the offending group. Such warfare was not of long duration but was quickly settled by retaliatory measures.

Except with the Washo, the Miwok, and other "foreign" tribes, warfare was seldom the result of territorial encroachment. It was generally the custom to share the privileges of hunting, fishing, and gathering with other groups speaking the same language, but the intruding Indians had to bring presents or goods to be traded. In cases of food shortage in given areas, however, the people living in those areas were permitted to gather supplies in areas where food was more plentiful without the necessity of presents or trade. The understanding was that they would repay their obligation in like manner whenever their benefactors were faced with famine.

Before the coming of the Whites, the Indians did not travel far from their home village, and it was rarely that anyone went more than 20 or 25 miles from the place of his birth during the whole course of his lifetime. Within a given area, however, there was a great deal of movement from place to place, chiefly for the purpose of finding a more abundant food and water supply. Movement almost invariably followed the course of the larger streams. This, in the foothills and mountains especially, meant a general easterly-westerly direction, for the deep, rugged canyons of the large rivers and their branches made travel between north and south too difficult to be undertaken frequently or by large groups. Movements of relatively contiguous groups were occasioned by cooperation in drives for game, by gatherings for Big Times (lu mai), and by the need for a united attack or defense against a common enemy, which was usually the Washo.

The Indians over the entire area called themselves Nisenan, which means simply "Indian" or "people". They had no specific names for the various groups of their own "tribe". Any other group was referred to by the cardinal direction in which it lay from the speaker's group. The cardinal points of the compass were: to cim, north; ko mo, south; no to, east; tai, west. The suffix, nan, was used to designate "people of". Thus, any other group was either To cim nan, Ko mo nan, No to nan, or Tai nan according to the direction in

which it lay from the speaker, irrespective of distance. The suffix, kau wi, added to the name for a direction, meaning the "land or country of" that particular direction, was used by the Northern Maidu. There were slight variations in these terms, due to dialectic differences.

Powers uses the form Nishenam. Dixon refers to them as the Southern Maidu. None of my informants spoke of themselves or of their people by the term Maidu. On the other hand, those living in the northern portion of the territory called the people to the north and the northeast of them Maidu. These they recognized as being slightly different from themselves culturally and spoke of their language as "hard to understand". (See section on boundaries.)

The Nisenan called their neighbors on the south, i.e., the Miwok, Kor ni. The latter referred to the Nisenan by the name Ta mu le. Their eastern neighbors were the Washo, but one informant (C) said that Mo na mu se was the name used by the Nisenan in speaking of these people. To cim mai du and No to mai du were the other two divisions of their stock on the north. What their western neighbors across the Sacramento River, the Patwin, were called could not be ascertained.

SETTLEMENTS

Villages (hu pu) were built upon level knolls or upon gentle slopes having a southerly exposure. Several factors entered into the selection of the sites. An adequate water supply was of first consideration and, for this reason, the villages were always built close to running water or to good springs. Warmth in winter and fairly open country about the village were other important factors. The first was essential, because it was only in the winter and late fall and early spring that the entire population was gathered together. During the remainder of the year, the inhabitants were scattered in search of subsistence. Open country was desired in order to see the approach of strangers and to improve hunting conditions. For this reason, the land about the villages was burned over frequently in order to keep it free from underbrush. This helped also to drive away rattlesnakes, of which the Indians were very much afraid.

Villages were thus chiefly located on warm, open sites above and close to creeks and to the smaller affluents of the big rivers. It was frequently stated by informants that at one time or another, there were settlements upon every small stream within the territory. The fact that the water in these streams, as well as in the springs, became very low or dried up entirely in the summer was another factor causing the people to move away during that season. There were no permanent villages in the steep, dark, narrow canyons of the large rivers, nor at altitudes where deep snow lay on the ground all winter. In fact, it was rare to find permanent settlements higher than 3,500 feet except in warm, protected valleys.[1]

The matter of food supply was another consideration in the choice of sites, although only a small portion of the group's sustenance came from the vicinity of the village. When the supply of food about a group of villages was exhausted, the people moved to a more favorable location. According to one informant (I), the Indians rarely occupied one settlement for more than ten years and, frequently, the site was changed within a year or two after it was first occupied.[2]

The area in the vicinity of a village furnished a not inconsiderable proportion of the means of livelihood. Rabbits, squirrels, wood rats, and other small game, as well as deer and other forms of larger game, abounded. There were plenty of acorns, pine nuts, manzanita, and insects to a lesser extent. Roots and seed-bearing grasses were found in varying quantities, depending upon the location, but these, together with materials used in making twine, baskets, tools, and weapons, were found more abundantly farther afield. The matter of subsistence is dealt with more fully under the section devoted to that subject.

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[1] Cf. Kroeber, Handbook, 395.

[2] Power, 318-319, says "The Nishinam are the most nomadic of all the California tribes within its boundaries."

Villages varied in size from the smaller settlements containing from three to seven houses (D) to the large camps which were occupied by from 200 to 300 people (F). Most of the people in the smaller villages were related to one another by marriage or by blood. This was true to a lesser extent of the big settlements. There were two types of houses: the large dance or ceremonial house (kum), called "roundhouse" by informants, and the ordinary bark and brush dwelling (hu). In former times, the kum was excavated to a depth of three or four feet and had either two or four main posts. Nowadays, the assembly house is either a round or a rectangular affair built up of boards or logs without any excavation. One informant (F) stated that the Indians about Clipper Gap never dug out their kums but merely built them up out of brush, bark, leaves, and dirt, much like a greatly enlarged hu. Not every village had a kum, but there was at least one kum to every group of related settlements.

Head Man

The leader of a group was the head man (huk), or "captain" as he is now called.[3] He was not a chief in the political sense[4] but was merely the man with the "best head". He usually passed his office on to his son, nephew, or grandson but, if none of his heirs had the necessary qualities and abilities, a new head man was elected by the older men and women of the group.

The duties of the head man were to organize and set the time for rabbit, deer, and other game drives, to advise his people as to the best time for gathering acorns, pine nuts, etc., and to confer with the older people and the head men of other villages upon all matters relating to the welfare of the group. He "had the say" as to whether or not war should be made against another group or against the Miwok or the Washo. He also set the time for the dances, now called Big Times (lu mai), and sent out invitations by the means of knotted strings to the head men of other groups. At meetings involving the presence of more than one head man, there seems to have been no distinction in rank. Whenever general meetings were called, the members of villages having no kum went to the nearby settlement which had a kum.

The head man told the people when and where to build the kum and, since this was to be used as a general assembly house, the Indians in other groups were asked to come and help build it. The kum was generally considered as belonging to the head man, but he rarely lived in it except possibly for a short time during the summer. In winter, it was too large and too difficult to keep warm to be used as a dwelling, so the "captain" usually lived in an ordinary hu. When not in use, the kum was kept closed and the dance regalia kept there.[5]

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[3]Cf. Faye, UCPAAE, 20:42, 1923.

[4]Powers, 319, says that the Nisenan had no political organization (Cf. Kroeber, Handbook, 396).

[5]Cf. Kroeber, Handbook, 399.

The head man had other people fish, hunt, and gather food for him. This was regarded in the light of pay for his services. He was given his choice of the first fish, deer, or rabbits caught. After that, he divided the results of the drives among all the people, taking what was left for his own use. Among most of the groups, certain oak trees were considered as belonging only to the head man. If he were too sick or too old to gather his own acorns, others would gather them for him.

All the members of a community had equal rights within the area which was considered as belonging to the settlement. They could keep out others who came to poach and, usually, they exercised this privilege unless the intruder belonged to a friendly group and was in need of food. The land belonging to a village was pretty definitely known and, in many instances, its boundaries were indicated by piles of stones.[6] Each village had a name, and the people of each village were designated by the suffix mu se, which means "people of" or "folks". Thus, Bisian-mu se meant the people of Bisian, or "Bisianites".[7]

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[6]Cf. Power, 314, "Like all others, the Nishinam name every camp, spring, flat, prominent hill, river, etc., but they very seldom use the name of a camp or village, as others do, to denote the inhabitants of it."

[7]Cf. Power, 320; Kroeber, Handbook, 398.

SUBSISTENCE[1]

Hunting, fishing, and gathering went on at all seasons of the year. The summer was the time of greatest activity, for it was then that the Indians left their more or less permanent villages in the lower altitudes and went eastward up into the mountains (no tai). There, they established themselves in small camps which were located near streams wherever possible. A hunting camp was called so pe-se o which means, literally, "river place". Each group from the lower altitudes had special areas higher up in the mountains.[2] These areas were confined to a general easterly direction from the permanent settlements because the deep canyons of the big rivers, as well as the desire not to encroach unnecessarily upon the territory of another group, prevented any general movement to the north or south. Food rights were apparently jealously guarded. The Nisenan rarely encroached upon the territory of the Miwok or vice versa. Towards the east, the hunting of the Nisenan was limited by their fear of the Washo who frequently came down over the mountains to attack and kill small parties of the former. According to informants, it was always the Washo who were the aggressors. The Tai nan people, that is the Nisenan of the Sacramento Valley, hunted only as far as the foothills (C).

Deer were hunted both in the summer and in the winter. Several methods were employed. The most effective method was by drives in which the members of several villages took part. The deer were either driven by lesser hunters who went into mountains, keeping windward of the deer, and drove the deer towards their runways where they were ambushed by the best marksmen. Sometimes, a circle of fire was built around a considerable area so that the animals within the area were driven towards the center where men with bows and arrows were stationed upon high, rocky ground. Such drives were held in the late spring, summer, and fall. The results of the drives were divided up among all the people. Practically every portion of the deer was used. Even the bones of fish and rabbits also were crushed, pounded up in round mortars (poulu), and eaten, for they were thought to make one strong. The meat which was not needed immediately was dried, to be stored for winter use.

Deer were also hunted by men singly or in groups of four or five. The hunters wore the antlers and hide of a slain deer in order to decoy the animals within range of the bow and arrow. Fleet hunters sometimes killed deer by running them down. In the Sacramento Valley and the lower foothills, this method was employed in the early spring when the ground was soft so that the animals became mired in the mud. In the mountains, they were run down during the winter. In both instances, it was only the larger animals which were hunted in this fashion.

From the region of Nevada City to the northern boundary of the Nisenan territory, ropes or nets made of twisted milkweed fiber were used in hunting deer. These were said to be "over a hundred feet long", and were stretched

[1] Cf. Kroeber, Handbook, 409-411.

[2] Beals in his manuscript on the Nisenan.

along the runways near which the hunters were concealed. In the southern portion of the territory, ropes or nets seem not to have been used, although mention was made of snares, something like quail snares only larger.

Antelope and elk were plentiful in former times down in the Sacramento Valley. In the winter and early spring, they were run down by fleet hunters or were shot with the bow and arrow. Deer were not so plentiful in that region as they were in the hills and mountains.

Bear were hunted during the winter because their hides were in better condition at that season than at any other time. Heavy oak poles, cut in the fall and well seasoned, were lighted at one end and driven into the bear's den by the most fearless of the hunters. When the bear came out of his lair and tried to escape, he was shot by archers stationed in trees or behind rocks. At other times, flaming torches or poisoned spears were rammed down the bear's throat. Bear hunts were always accompanied by a great deal of ceremony. Black and cinnamon bears were the species most frequently hunted. On a hunt, the Indians wore only rabbit-skin blankets and snowshoes made of hazel wood or of the vines of wild grape wrapped around with deer sinew. Fire was carried with them in the form of live coals of oak wood.

Wild cat and California mountain lion were killed and eaten, and their skins formed important articles for use and trade. They were usually caught just after they had killed a deer or some other smaller animal and were gorged with the carcass.

Rabbits were killed in the mountains with sticks and blunted arrows. In the valley and foothills, they were hunted in drives in which the members of several village groups, called together by the head men, took part. A net, pu, "about half a mile long" made of greasewood (panaka), wild hemp, or milkweed, was set up in a locality where rabbits were known to be plentiful. Women and boys drove the animals into the net, and the men clubbed them to death. Drives took place usually in the spring when the ground was soft so that the stakes holding the net could be driven in deep and firm. The results of the catch were divided up among the families taking part in the drive. Every bit of the rabbit was used in some way. Part was consumed on the spot and part, particularly the ears, was dried to be stored for winter use. A Big Time was frequently held in celebration of a successful drive. Sometimes, fox, coon, coyote, and other animals were caught in the rabbit net. The coyote was never eaten.

Wood rats, field mice, cottontails, and several varieties of squirrels were plentiful in the Nisenan territory and furnished an important part of the Indians' food supply. Mice were trapped; rats were shot when they were driven from their nests.

Fish of many sorts abounded in the streams and rivers which flowed through Nisenan territory. In the lower courses of the large rivers, especially of the American, Bear, Yuba, and of Honcut Creek, salmon (mai) were netted and speared.[3] Many of them were dried and kept for winter consumption and for

[3] Cf. Kroeber, this series, 24:262, 1929.

trade. The backbones were crushed and eaten. Small fish (pa la), such as suckers, pike, white fish, and trout, were caught in the small streams higher up in the mountains during the spring of the year. Dip nets, dams, traps, and dead falls were used. Fish were also poisoned with soap root and with "a weed which grows flat on the ground" in the Sacramento Valley. When this method was used, several groups of Indians often united in a drive which resulted in a large catch. The fish were dried. Eels, which were greatly relished, were knocked off the rocks and caught in baskets.

Fish worms were dug in the winter when the ground was soft. They were made into "a delicious thick soup".

Quail were caught near springs and small creeks. Snares or loops made of long human hair (women's) were fastened to two sticks driven tight into the ground.[4] They remained open by being kept wet. All other ways to the water were barricaded with logs and brush. The hair of certain women was considered to have luck, and these women were given the quails' top-knots, out of which they made earrings. Mountain quail were caught in "very long" fences about two feet high when they came down from the mountains in the autumn. Nooses made of women's hair were set about two feet apart in the fence, which was made out of brush and twigs. Valley quail were said to usually fly over this kind of fence. The people who caught the quail divided them up with the other members of their villages.

Birds of all kinds, except the buzzard, were eaten. Grouse and wild doves were caught in nooses set near springs. Wild pigeons were caught in large nets which were stretched across the saddle between two hills. Ducks and geese were netted chiefly down in the Sacramento Valley. They were also shot with the bow and arrow. Crows were caught at night in a fan-shaped net. Blue jays, red-headed woodpeckers, yellowhammers, and other small birds were lured to brush shelters and shot at short distances with the bow and arrow. Their feathers, as well as the feathers of other birds, were largely used in ceremonials and for decoration.

Grasshoppers were caught in drives, the method varying according to the physiography of the area. In the open country of the valley and lower foothills, the Indians, with sticks and brush in their hands, drove the grasshoppers into previously dug holes. In the higher altitudes where the vegetation was thicker, the Indians built a circle of fire, similar to that employed in deer drives only over a very much smaller area. The fire crept slowly through the pine needles and underbrush and roasted to a crisp brown all the grasshoppers which were in its path.

Hornets and yellowjackets, both larvae and adults, were eaten and relished. Pine needles, tied together in a bunch and lighted, were pushed into yellowjackets' holes in order to smother the insects which might be in them. Bunches of pine needles fastened to the end of long sticks were used to burn out hornets' nests. Dried or roasted grasshoppers, yellowjackets, and hornets were stored for winter use.

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[4]Cf. Faye, UCPAAE, 20:39, 1923.

Ants of the mountain variety which build large houses were eaten as a sort of relish. The ants were mixed with fine dirt and crushed so that the dirt was impregnated with their juice.

Acorns (u ti) were gathered and utilized according to the general pattern of acorn culture in central California. The variety most generally preferred was the black oak (Quercus kelloggii). As these acorns were found most abundantly in the higher altitudes, they were gathered chiefly in the early fall when the Indians were living in their temporary summer camps in the mountains. The acorns of the mountain or white live oak (Q. chrysolepis) were also popular, but those of the interior live oak (Q. wislizenii), which grew in the valley and lower foothills, were considered by most informants to be too bitter. White oak or water oak (Q. lobata) grew in the Sacramento Valley and foothills, and the acorns of this variety formed an important part of the food supply of the Indians living in that region.

In former times, as a general rule, the Nisenan did not have to go very far from the sites of their permanent villages to gather acorns. Before the coming of the White man, oak trees were far more plentiful in their territory than they are now. It was one of the functions of the head man to tell the people when to go out and get acorns and, frequently, the members of several village groups united on gathering expeditions. Acorns stored in granaries (chi pu) made of upright poles wound with grape vines formed an important part of the winter food supply.

Buckeye was another useful food plant found in the Nisenan territory. Its treatment was similar to that of the acorn, although it was said that buckeye was leached in cool water while white oak acorns were leached in hot water. Buckeye was the wood used in making fire.[5]

Nuts of the digger pine (Pinus sabiniana) were found in abundance in the vicinity of the permanent settlements, for these trees grew largely on the dry slopes of the foothills. On their summer hunting and gathering expeditions to the mountains, the Nisenan acquired the nuts of the sugar pine (P. lambertiana) which were greatly relished for their sweet taste. Hazel nuts, gathered in the mountains in the fall, were also very much sought after. Yellow pine nuts were not eaten.

Roots growing along water courses were dug during the summer. They were pounded up in mortars and the flour, pressed into cakes the size of a plate, was put away in baskets for the winter. Wild onion (chan), a wild sweet potato (su kum), and "Indian potato" (du bus) were among the most desirable. Wild carrot (ba) had a salty taste and was used as medicine. Wild garlic was used to wash the head and body.

Pine roots and hazel shoots furnished material for making baskets. These were obtained in the higher altitudes. The finest and strongest baskets, however, were made from two roots which grew along the riverbeds of the Sacramento

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[5]Cf. Kroeber, Handbook, 418.

Valley. The Nisenan names for these roots were do kon and pi tor. Willow and red-bud and certain rushes growing along the streams in the valley and foothills were also used in the making of baskets. Red-bud (lul) was used for red decoration, and a fern, called ta tat, furnished one of the materials for black decoration.[6]

Grasses and rushes were very important in the life of the Nisenan. The seeds of many grasses were gathered in the summer and stored in baskets for winter use. Tule in the valleys was the material most used for making string and mats. In the mountains, a grass which informants called "milkweed" was used almost entirely in the manufacture of nets, string, netted caps, mats, rabbit-skin blankets, and the ropes used to catch deer. Aprons made of woven and pounded wire grass were worn by the women.[7]

Indian tobacco (pa ni) was the only plant cultivated by the Nisenan. It was planted a long way from the village, because it was desired to keep its location a secret.[8]

Berries and fruits were used extensively by the Nisenan in common with most tribes, and many varieties of both grew in their territory. Manzanita (ko tor and dok dok) had a wide range, extending from the foothills to the higher altitudes where the Indians went for the summer. The berries were eaten and also used in the making of a very desirable drink, called manzanita cider (yo chim or yu tik). Coffee berries, Christmas berries (yo lus), blackberries, huckleberries, and the like, wild grapes (pi im hin), wild plums (gas), and other native fruits were gathered in the summer and early fall when the Nisenan were away from their permanent settlements. Wild cherries were not relished.

Woods of several trees and shrubs had many special as well as common uses. Yew wood (yor li lip im char) was obtained in the mountains and was considered the best wood for bows. Such bows were backed with deer sinew. Bows used in hunting small game were not sinew-backed and were made from maple (dap) and cedar (man). Two kinds of wood were used in making arrows. A short piece to which the point was attached was made of a "hard wood with little heart" (bol nit), probably syringa or mountain mahogany. The long shaft was made of a "light wood with much heart" (but dok). Deer sinew and spruce or pine gum, which had many other uses, were the means of fastening the arrow point to the shaft.[9]

The shredded inner bark of the maple, pounded soft, was used in making loincloths and aprons. Wood, as well as stone, was the material out of which pipes were made. Pine and manzanita were the woods most frequently employed for this purpose.

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[6]Cf. Kroeber, Handbook, 414-415.

[7]Cf. Kroeber, this series, 24:260-262, 1929.

[8]Cf. Faye, UPAAE, 20:40, 1923; Kroeber, UPAAE, 24:263, 1929.

[9]Cf. Kroeber, Handbook, 417; Kroeber, UPAAE, 24:261, 1929.

Stone was an important factor in the Nisenan life, especially before the coming of the Whites. Flint had a widespread occurrence and was used for arrow and spear heads, knives, scrapers, and other tools. Soapstone (ku le) was more scarce and was used for mortars. When polished with quartz or flint, it was the kind of stone used in boiling food because it had good heat-withstanding qualities. Sandstone, in which a groove was cut, was used for smoothing and straightening arrows. A black and a red stone, probably basalt, was another material out of which knives and arrowheads were made, although this stone was said to have been much more difficult to find than flint. Obsidian was much sought after for it "came from only one place" in the north, probably outside the Nisenan territory.[10]

[10] Cf. Kroeber, Handbook, 399, 418.

OWNERSHIP

The Nisenan had a definite sense of individual ownership in regard to certain kinds of property, but the list of what was considered to be private was a comparatively small one. The net used in rabbit drives was owned by the man who made it. In most cases, this seems to have been the head man. Not everyone could make a net, and many months and sometimes years often elapsed before a large net could be completed. The fur of the rabbits taken in drives was also said to have been owned individually, but there was a difference of opinion as to who owned it. One informant (I) said that the fur, together with the ears, belonged to the man who skinned the rabbits; another (J) that it belonged to the man who owned the net. In this case, the latter had another man make the fur up into rabbit-skin blankets, giving him beads, arrows, and other articles in payment.

Quail fences and snares were owned but, here again, there were conflicting opinions as to who the owner was. One informant (C) said that one man made the fence with the help of his relatives and that he exercised the privilege of ownership over it. Another informant (I) claimed that the fences were owned by the oldest men in the group which made them. A third informant (J) said that the single snares set to catch quail, doves, and other birds were made and owned by single individuals who, however, were always generous in the division of their catch.

The rope which was strung along the runways in deer hunts was owned individually. It was often borrowed by other hunters who repaid the owner with deer meat and acorns. Nets for deer, when they were used, were owned by the men who made them. When a wounded deer ran into the territory of another group, notice of this event was sent to this group. If the deer was killed by the people into whose territory it ran, they retained the meat, dividing it up among themselves. They gave the hide, however, to the hunter of the group which had wounded the deer in the first place.

Fishing in the streams was open to everyone, but fish holes, and eel holes particularly, were owned by individuals[1] who, however, shared their prerogative with other members of their groups when payment was made. The owners of fish and eel holes were usually the old men of the families. Dams were also owned by single men, although it often required several people to build them. When the dam was built, the owner permitted his helpers to take fish from it.

The man who made twine, nets, mats, etc., was said (I) to own the patches of milkweed from which he obtained his material. Oak trees which stood close to a man's dwelling were considered as being his particular property,[2] and it

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[1]Cf. Kroeber, Handbook, 395.

[2]Cf. Faye, UCPAAE, 20:41, 1923.

has already been mentioned that certain oak trees were set apart for the individual use of the head man. The latter, according to most informants, also owned the kum. Grasshopper holes belonged to individual heads of families.

The conception of group ownership was also comparatively strong among the Nisenan. Particularly was this applied to the matter of salt. There was a salt spring at Cool, El Dorado County, and one near where Lincoln now stands. Both of these belonged to the group of the Nisenan whose center of influence was at Auburn, and these Indians forcibly resisted the attempts of strangers to steal the salt from these deposits. A friendly group which brought presents was, however, permitted to take what it needed. While land was not owned, the hunting, fishing, and gathering rights attached to it were guarded against encroachment. Throughout the whole Nisenan territory, there was a close relationship between the means of livelihood in a specific locality and the group which occupied it.

TRADE

Trade was carried on extensively both among the different groups of the Nisenan and between the Nisenan and neighboring tribes. No mention was made, however, of trade with the Washo. The exchange of articles almost invariably took place between the east and the west, following the course of the main streams. The deep, precipitous canyons of the large rivers made intercourse in the foothills and mountains between north and south very difficult.

From the Tai nan, or Sacramento Valley people, the Noto nan, or mountaineers, received roots used in making the finest and strongest baskets (do kon and pi tor), oyster shells (ur lo), salmon (mai) and, in former times, antelope meat. The latter gave in exchange many things, including dried deer and bear meat, the hides of the wildcat and the California lion, and rabbit-skin blankets. Red-bud and bear hides were also traded for the pi tor root from the Sacramento Valley.[1]

Black oak acorns, sugar pine nuts, and manzanita berries were traded down in the valley for dried fish, white oak acorns, and beads. Yew wood for bows grew higher up in the mountains and was rather scarce. This, together with Indian tobacco and the feathers of the yellowhammer and red-headed woodpecker, was given to the Indians living in the valley and foothills in exchange for beads or disc money which the latter obtained from tribes "far to the west near the sea coast".[2] Five-hundred of the best white beads were worth about \$20; second-class beads were worth about a dollar a hundred; the common, undressed beads were worth about 50 cents a hundred.

When deer became scarce in one locality, the group living there would send word to another group having plenty of deer in their territory, and an exchange would be effected with deer meat and acorns. Deer ropes, nets, and the grooved stones used in smoothing and straightening arrows were traded for bear and deer hides, rabbit-skin blankets, and beads. Rabbit-skin blankets were formerly worth from \$30 to \$50 apiece, according to size and quality. Salt was traded both in the valley and in the mountains for beads and hides. Milkweed, which made the strongest twine, was an article much sought after by the Indians of the Sacramento Valley. Arrows and bows, both the ordinary and the sinew-backed varieties, were important in the trade relations of the Nisenan, and good hunters and good fishermen often exchanged part of their catch.

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[1]Powers, 337, states that what the Indians called "ul lo" was made from varieties of the ear shell (Haliotis).

[2]Powers, 336, states that money, which was called ha wok, was made from a thick white shell (<u>Pachydesma crassatelloides</u>) found on the coast of Southern California.

NAMES OF SETTLEMENTS AND PLACE NAMES

The Nisenan had names for every mountain and small hill, every flat, valley, and canyon, every spring and creek, and every noteworthy location on the large rivers. In short, every place of any prominence whatsoever had a special name. Villages derived their names from prominent features of the immediate landscape, from important local vegetation, and sometimes from some mythical or local celebrity. When the inhabitants of a village moved to another location, the new settlement assumed a different name from that of the old, but there was no evidence to show that the names of the larger units were derived from the name of the principal village.[1]

It was by no means possible to visit the sites of all the Indian villages. In many cases, all trace of them has been completely obliterated, either by the White man's cultivation and settlements or by the growth of natural vegetation. Then, too, the memory of informants was often limited to the name and a mere general location of the old villages, and any attempt to place them exactly was met with failure. Wherever it was possible to do so, I had the informant conduct me to the actual site and, in these cases, I have given a more detailed description of conditions as they exist there than in cases where the sites were not visited.

I have listed the names of settlements and places, with descriptions of each as far as available, under the names of the principal centers of influence in the larger groupings. In many instances, village names and place names are identical, and these I have not listed separately. Place names which could not be connected with the name of any settlement are grouped together under one heading. Villages where there was a kum, or ceremonial house, and a head man are indicated by an asterisk (*). Capital letters in parentheses refer to the list of informants; numbers refer to the map.

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[1] Cf. Beals, mss.

AUBURN-COLFAX, PLACER COUNTY

Auburn lies a mile and a half west of the American River, two miles southwest of where the Middle and the North Forks come together. It is at an elevation of about 1,400 feet and 1,000 feet above the bed of the river, which cuts a steep-walled canyon at this point. The drainage is for the most part southwestward toward the Sacramento. The topography and the vegetation are practically the same as in the preceding section.

The principal places in the vicinity of Auburn are as follows: east - Cool, Pilot Hill, Greenwood, Georgetown, Spanish Diggings, Todd Valley; south - Rattlesnake Bridge; west - Newcastle, Ophir, Doty Flat, Gold Hill, Bald Hill and, some 15 miles westward, Lincoln; north - Clipper Gap, Hotaling, Rock Creek, Dry Creek, Weimar, Applegate and, about 18 miles to the north, Colfax.

Colfax has an elevation of 2,450 feet. The Bear River, two miles due west, has an elevation there of about 1,850 feet. Colfax Hill, between the river and the town, is 2,880 feet high. The North Fork of the American River, about a mile and a half due east of the town, has an elevation of about 1,150 feet. The Greenhorn River flows almost due south to join the Bear River about three miles north of Colfax. Gold Run, Dutch Flat, and Emigrant Gap are all northeast of Colfax on the high narrow ridge which separates the canyon of the North Fork of the American River from the canyon of the Bear. Nevada County begins on the other side of the Bear River from Colfax.

Before the railroad was built, the area around Colfax was covered with oak, sugar pine, and some digger pine, but most of this has been cut off. "Acorns are so scarce now that nobody can find enough to make acorn bread" (G). The vegetation as it exists at present consists mainly of chaparral, manzanita, some oak, brush, and berry-bearing bushes and, on the upper slopes, some fine stands of the pine-fir-cedar type.

The Auburn group had two villages with large ceremonial houses. The Colfax Indians had one large village with a kum, as did the group around Sugar Pine Hill. Often, the members of these three groups joined together for hunts, drives, and acorn gathering. When a great number of rabbits were caught, the Indians from Auburn, Colfax, Clipper Gap, and Sugar Pine Hill gathered together at one of the settlements for a Big Time. This was usually held at Hu ul, the village of Captain John Oite, who exercised considerable influence over the whole area. Captain John owned a big rabbit net, and he notified the people of the various villages when a drive was to be held (E and F).

The Auburn Indians hunted and fished and gathered nuts and seeds in the summer around Georgetown and places to the east. The summer hunting ground of the Colfax group was around Gold Run and Dutch Flat, but they did not go as far away as Emigrant Gap because they were afraid of the Washo (H).

Names of Settlements

Ko tom yan -- Close to the railroad bridge just outside of Auburn on the road leading to the reservation. It was where Captain Tom lived, but it had no kum. The name means "manzanita hill" (E).

Wen ne a * -- Near the railroad line which runs south of Auburn. There was a graveyard (us tu) there. The village had between 100 and 200 people, and Captain John Oite owned the kum. Since there was no kum at Ko tom yan, the captain there called his Big Times at Wen ne a (E).

Hu ul * -- Near the above village, close to the railroad cut. Captain John later moved Wen ne a to this site (E and F).

Py u hu * -- In Long Valley (Dutch Ravine), about five miles from Auburn. Captain Anton was head man there (E).

Si ya kai yan * -- Where Cool is now. An important salt spring was near there (E).

O kil kil -- Close to Si ya kai yan. Where informant Jim Dick (E) was born.

Su min * -- A large village at Sugar Pine Hill (E).

Ba mu ma -- Where the town of Lincoln now stands, about 12 miles due east of Auburn in the Sacramento Valley. There was no kum there, as it was a camp used only for fishing, hunting rabbits, and gathering acorns. There was a big salt spring at Ba mu ma, which was controlled by the Auburn group. The settlement was said to have been named from a man by the name of "Ba" (wild carrot) who ate his lunch there one day. When he had finished and departed, the Indian children picked up and ate what he had left behind. They found that it tasted salty[1] (E and F).

Pit chi ku -- Where Roseville is now, about ten miles due south of Lincoln and 15 miles directly southwest of Auburn. It was only a temporary camp for acorn gathering (E).

Ba ka cha -- At Rocklin; it was a permanent settlement, but it had no kum (E).

Bu pu i -- On the Bear River, where Wheatland is now. Elevation 90 feet (F).

Tgi tgi * -- On Coon Creek which flows westward between Lincoln and Sheridan through a town called Ewing, which may be on the site of the Indian settlement (F). There were no permanent villages at Sheridan, Penryn, Loomis, or Newcastle, but the Indians frequently went to these places - all southwest of Auburn in the lower foothills - for short stays in order to gather food (E).

Kau bus ma * -- The largest settlement at Colfax. Man i pa was head man there. He was head man also of all the villages about Colfax and the father of my informant, Jane Prout (E, G, and H).

Chu yu mom * -- Near the town of Colfax, where Man i pa moved his kum after the Whites came. My informant could not tell just where it was situated (H). The name means "slim willow water".

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[1]Cf., p. 30, this paper.

Koy o * -- About three miles south of Colfax. It had a graveyard called ko yo us tu. Jane Prout's grandfather was head man there (G and H).

Sum yan * -- Two settlements with one large kum on a hill to the east of Colfax. My informant did not know the exact location (H).

Hem hem be * -- On a small creek a mile and a half west of Colfax. The site is now occupied by the Rising Sun Mine. Jane Prout's father's brother was head man there (G and H).

A il pa kan * -- Between Weimar and Landic. The name means "sand spring". The head man there married a woman from Koy o.

Pa lam pen o nu * -- In New York Canyon on the other side of Iowa Hill from Colfax. The head man there was very old, but Frank Suehead could not remember his name. The name of the village means "fish basket turned upside down" (G and H).

Kau ya ma -- Near Colfax, but exact location unknown. Jane Prout was born there (H).

Om hoi -- A small camp at what is now known as Cape Horn (H).

Hoi yo se o -- A small camp; exact location unknown (H).

Wu tish e -- A small camp; exact location unknown (H).

Ke o wu -- A small camp; exact location unknown (H).

Ba pe bo ma -- A large camp with no kum across the American River (H).

Ma nai e -- A large settlement without a kum on a small creek near the railroad bridge north of Colfax (H).

So lok lok -- On the flat just north of the town of Colfax (H).

Chi stok um pu -- A large settlement without a kum just south of Colfax and near Kau bus ma. Jane Prout's father's oldest brother was head man of this village, as well as of Hem hem be, G ass, and Ke o wu (H).

G ass -- A small settlement near Hem hem be (H).

Do kon im pa kan * -- At Little Oak Flat. The name means "wire grass spring". There was also another large settlement at Big Oak Flat, which is about 18 miles due east of Colfax between the branches of the Middle Fork of the American River at about 4,500 feet elevation. My informant could not remember the name of this village (G).

Man im pa kan -- About 200 yards from where my informant, Frank Suehead, lives a mile and a half west of Colfax. The site of this village is on a knoll, now covered with white and black oak, coffee berry, buckeye, yellow pine, and digger pine. The knoll slopes down to a tiny creek, bordered by willow, red-bud, and water oak. On the other side of the creek is a slope which is heavily forested with yellow pine. The creek flows westward into Bear River,

about a mile away. The circle marking the outline of an ordinary dwelling (hu) is still to be seen. The name means "cedar springs" (G).

Pow o to -- Now Damascus. It was only a summer camp (G).

Tol i mom -- Now Red Point. A summer camp. The name means "cold water" (G).

Kil im yan -- Now Westville. A summer camp. About here, the Nisenan frequently fought with the Washo. The name means "buckbrush hill" (G).

Ne hu pu -- A summer camp at Cold Spring Hill, just south of Gold Run (G).

Hem hem * -- A large settlement where Yankee Jim is now (F).

Wa tas * -- Where Spring Garden is now, near Forest Hill. It was named from a medicine (watas) which was found growing around the spring there (F).

Om lam -- Now Mile Hill Toll House. The name means "tall rocks" (F).

O pok pok * -- A large settlement at Todd Valley, between the Middle and the North Forks of the American River (F).

Chi ka pa kan * -- The site is where the settlement of Clipper Gap now stands, seven miles north of Auburn. The name means "Indian potato spring" (F).

Pen u i * -- A large village close to the Clipper Gap reservation where my informant, Lizzie Enos, lives. The reservation is at present the gathering place for Indians from all over the area. It has a roundhouse which is built of boards entirely above the ground. The elevation of this site is about 1,600 feet. It is on a fairly level knoll above a small stream which is dry in the summer. The Indians get their water from a spring (F).

Su min im ya man * -- The site of an old settlement close to Pen u i. The name means "sugar pine hill" (F).

We mer * -- At Wiemar, on the State Highway between Clipper Gap and Colfax. It was named from an Indian who once owned the kum there (F).

Ha ka ka * -- On what is now known as Ragsdell's place. It was named from a kind of grass (clover?) which grows about the site (F).

Hau nos * -- A short distance from Pen u i on the South Fork of Dry Creek, after which it was named (F).

Yo los yan * -- A large settlement near Tunnel Hill. The name means "redberry hill" (F).

Di dit * -- About a mile southeast of Clipper Gap on Clipper Creek, which flows south into the Middle Fork of the American River. Di dit was also the name of a hill close by the site (F).

Bi si an * -- Where Bowman, just north of Auburn, now stands (F).

Po po ke mul * -- A small settlement just northeast of Clipper Gap. The name means "deep water in a little place where tule grows" (F).

Other Place Names

Chul ku -- North Fork of the American River; "the big river the other side of Auburn" (F).

Yo dok im se o -- North Fork of the American River. Yo dok are the falls where the Indians used to catch salmon (G).

Ko a ba -- Middle Fork of the American River (G).

Chul ku im se o -- Where the Middle and the North Fork join. There was no name for the American River as a whole (G).

Su lu se o -- South Fork of the American River; "the river the other side of Folsom" (F).

Ku min se o -- Bear River (F and G).[2]

Po pok mul im se o -- North Fork of Dry Creek (F).

Di dit im se o -- Clipper Creek (F).

Yam yan -- Sadie Mountain (F).

Ya man i kai yan -- A big hill across the American River from Auburn, probably Pilot Hill (E).

Bi si an -- Flat where Bowman Post Office now stands (F).

I yu -- The site of Applegate, between Clipper Gap and Colfax (F).

Po yo pa kun -- Grizzly Canyon. Name means "soap root spring" (G).

Om yol hur -- New York Canyon. Name means "rock fall down" (G).

Lu i tong kai -- Refuge Canyon. Means "log see-sawing up and down".

Chi u im se o -- Shirt Tail Canyon. Means "clover river" (G).

Po yum se o -- Volcano Canyon, where Bath is located (G).

Hem pom yan -- Michigan Bluff (G).

Ba tak pa i -- Mayflower. Name means "mud or something thrown against a flat surface, making a splash" (G).

Hum hum tu ke se o -- Indian Creek. Name means "river where owl lives in a hole". Tu ke means hole (G).

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[2] Powers, 317, states that the Bear River was called Nem se u (Great River) and that the Sacramento was called Nep em se u (Greater River).