

# *Yankee Hill Dispatch*

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*The Yankee Hill Dispatch is published three times per year. In each issue we include an article about the area's history. In this issue is part 2 of an article about the Concow Indians in this area. The Concow Indians played an important role in local Indian history. You may be surprised! This issue covers their history starting in 1859 after the first Indian roundup in Concow Valley. We hope you will find this series both informative and interesting.*

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## **The Indians of the Concow Valley, Yankee Hill and Cherokee**

### **Part Two**

The 1859 roundup of Indians in northern Butte County was instigated by residents of Tehama County as part of a larger roundup covering four counties. For the most part Butte County was not experiencing serious troubles between the whites and Indians. The local papers seldom reported any problems and they did not even mention the roundup in 1859, at the same time the Red Bluff papers were giving weekly reports on the progress. Ranchers in Tehama County were tired of cattle and horses being killed for food by starving Indians and the Indians were tired of the harsh treatment they received in return. To make things worse, the Federal Government's solution, the California Indian Reservation System was not working.

### **The Reservations Struggle to Survive**

By the end of 1859 suspicions were raised that the Indian reservations in Northern California were not properly supervised. The conflicts between whites and Indians on the reservations continued. Accusations were made about reservation management occupying land outside the reservation and using Indian labor and even reservation equipment and possibly money, to cultivate their land. Reservation staff were taking Indian women as companions, which resulted in suggestions that only married men be employed by the reservations. Several investigations were launched in 1858 and 1859. In 1859 and 1860 changes were made to reservation management that ultimately resulted in a complete reorganization of the system. The report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs in 1860 only contained a brief mention of California Reservations. There was no real information provided about the conditions on the reservations as was the usual practice, just a copy of two job offers extended for the recently created positions of Superintending Agents of the Northern and Southern California Indian Affairs.

**Nome Lackee Reservation**, near present day Corning, an investigation was made into the operation of the reservation; in Oct 1859 a recommendation was made to remove Vincent Geiger as Superintendent. Geiger was removed in early 1860, no immediate replacement was assigned. By July 1861 it was reported that there were no fences at the reservation, the buildings were dilapidated and only about 200 Indians were on the reservation. By 1864 the reservation land was starting to be taken over by squatters. The land was finally sold off in 1870.

**Mendocino Reservation**, near present day Fort Bragg, suffered a similar fate. Thomas Henley, the Indian agent was discharged in June 1859 for misappropriations of Government funds. In early 1861 George Hanson, appointed by President Lincoln to the newly created position of Supervisor of Northern California Indian Affairs, proposed closing the Mendocino Reservation; it would be another 5 years, the buildings all dilapidated, before it was formally closed. The land was sold off in 1869.

**Nome Cult Farms**, meanwhile in Round Valley, whites were continuing to move into the area claiming any land not owned by the Government. Thomas Henley, the recently fired agent for Mendocino Reservation and Simmon Storms, the founder of Round Valley and Nome Cult farms for the Government were themselves joint owners in a farm in the valley. Another force in the valley was George White, a powerful and ruthless landowner in Round Valley who owned nearly 1,600 acres and was not afraid to exert his influence to get his way. White would be accused of instigating many of the hostilities towards the Indians in Round Valley, both on and off the reservation.

The Government wanted to expand Nome Cult Farms beyond its 5,000 acres to accommodate the Indians from the other two reservations in Northern California. Efforts were made in 1858 to acquire the land of the other residents in Round Valley; the name of the reservation was officially changed from Nome Cult Farms to Round Valley Indian Reservation. Legal owners with titles resisted any attempt the government made to acquire their land. George White wanted \$50,000 for his property, a sum many considered outrageous and at least 5 times its true value.

**Note:** In order to enlarge the Round Valley reservation, in 1873 the government extended the boundaries into the mountains to the north. Much of the new land was leased out to several ranchers in exchange for a portion of their crop in order to raise money to support the reservation. Still there was resistance by squatters already on the land to move. The process of acquiring the land of legal owners and removing the squatters would not be completed until well into the 1890's.

### **The Concow Indians End up at Round Valley**

The Concow, Kimsheew and Tiger Indians rounded up in September 1859, numbering 218 adults and their children were first taken to Mendocino Reservation. Sometime in 1860 they were moved to Round Valley. It has been suggested that Indians from inland areas were not happy living in the coastal climate. It probably also had to do with the Indian agent having recently been discharged so there was a lack of leadership at the Mendocino Reservation.

Round Valley Reservation, with its 2,000 Indians was struggling with its own problems. In Sept 1861, Wailaki Indians living in a nearby valley raided local farms killing a large number of cattle and several valuable breeding horses. White settlers approached James Short, the Supervisor of Round Valley about recruiting Indians from the reservation to chase down the Wailaki Indians. Tome-ya-nem, the leader of the Concow Indians at the reservation was approached by the whites for help. Tome-ya-nem's father was YumYan also known as William Pete who was the Chief of the Concow in 1859, he recently had passed



### **Round Valley Circa 1850's**

Courtesy Mendocino County Historical Society

away. Tome-ya-nem was 23 years old when he was approached to assist the whites with the Wailaki Indians. In an interview published in 1884 in the *Overland Monthly* Tome-ya-nem reported he at first refused to help. He knew the Wailaki Indians were trouble “but that they had done no harm to either me or mine”. But the Ad-sals (whites) told him that “they will come one day and kill all the Con-cows as well as the whites”. Tome-ya-nem went to James Short, headman of the reservation, for advice and Short asked him to help.

Tome-ya-nem gathered up a number of the Con-cow warriors as well as some Yukas and Pit River Indians. Approximately 50 Indians along with 9 whites went in pursuit of the Wailaki Indians. They came across the Wailaki camp one morning, they numbered 300 to 400. The group attacked the camp, killing nearly 100 Wailaki, including women and children in less than 15 minutes. Tome-ya-nem reported he and one of the whites gathered the women and children to try and save them. But a Yuka Indian came and reported one of the Ad-sals (whites) had been wounded or possibly killed, the white man with Tome-ya-nem turned and had the women and children killed.

**Note:** In the 1884 article recounting this incident in 1861 the number killed was reported by Lt Tassin as 240 Wailaki Indians. This story points out several issues with the white/Indian relationship. (1) The Indians who worked with the whites were in a very precarious position of balancing their relationship with whites and their fellow Indians. (2) There was a huge disproportionate response by whites to Indian hostilities.

(3) In the news media there was always a claim that when things ended in hostilities against the Indians, women and children were spared and sent to reservations. This was done to appease the general public and make it sound like only the trouble makers were harmed. The reality is much different; in time some people did start to see through this facade. (4) The numbers of casualties reported in various accounts of battles are highly suspect and probably only estimates at best. The common practice was to leave the dead on the battle ground and the Indians would return and bury their dead.

### **The Concow Leave Round Valley**

By 1862 the situation on the reservation was becoming desperate; food and clothing were scarce because federal money was slow in coming. The local whites in Round Valley told the Indians the reservation was finished and they should leave, if they did not leave they soon would be killed. On September 24, 1862 over 400 Con-cow and Hat Creek Indians left the reservation with Tome-ya-nem, and headed back toward Chico hoping to see their homeland again. In his Sept 25<sup>th</sup> report, Superintending Agent of Indian Affairs, Northern District California, George Hanson reported that he was afraid for the Indians, if the government had paid the whites what they asked for their land this would not have happened. He indicated reservation employees were being threatened. He also stated he had been requesting troops for protection for nine months and was told none were available.

It is important to note that this was during the civil war; many of the landholders in Round Valley were originally from southern states and they were hostile. The government's ability to support the reservation with either cash or troops was limited. In February 1863 the Butte Record reported Agent Hanson had requested \$215,000 for the Northern District. The government allocation for both the Northern and Southern districts in California was \$70,000. The estimated Indian population on the state's reservations at the time was around 7,000 in Northern California and 1400 in Southern California. The total Indian population in the state was estimated to be around 33,000. Pre-contact estimates (before 1700) by Anthropologists for California's Indian population range from 175,000 to 300,000.

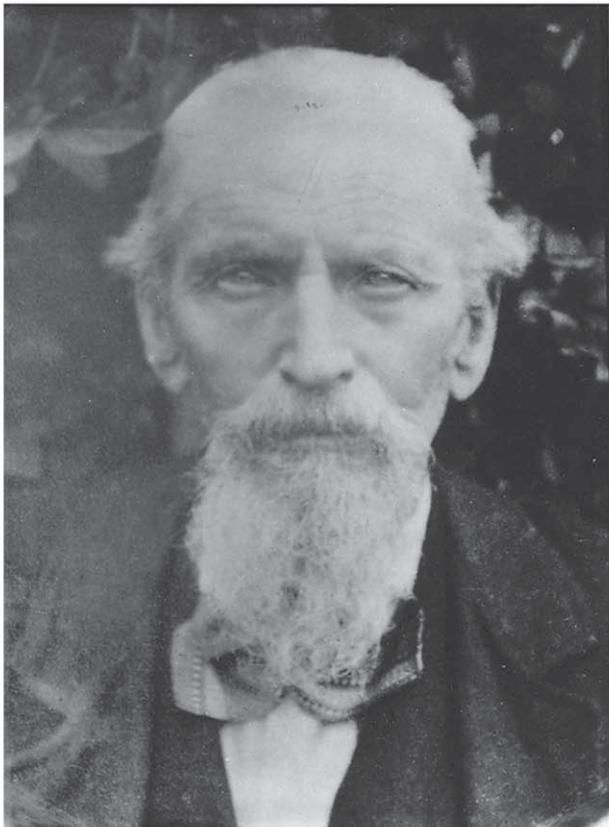
Agent Hanson wrote his report from his San Francisco office. He rode out to meet Tome-ya-nem and the 400 Indians who had followed him when they entered the Sacramento Valley. He tried to get them to go to Nome Lackee Reservation near present day Corning but Tome-ya-nem refused, he wanted to go home, saying he would stay 1 year. Hanson had no choice but to agree to let the Indians go on. He offered food and support for 1 year for their encampment 5 miles from Chico (near the current site of Bidwell-Sacramento River State Park). He then contacted Bidwell and made arrangements appointing Sub Agent Eddy to oversee the Indians there.

### **Indian Hostilities Rise in Butte County**

In 1859 the Indian hostilities were relatively few in Butte County. The Concow Indians had been rounded up because of actions taken by Tehama County. But in 1863 this would quickly change. In March, George Hays was herding sheep about six miles from Pence's ranch in the foothills when he discovered Indians had broken into his cabin. They stole blankets, clothes and provisions. He endeavored to recover his property when he was shot in the elbow and thigh. Bidwell with 20 men went out in pursuit of the Indians.

In June 1863 five Indians were hanged near Helltown. They were accused of stealing property. Later, some say in retaliation, several murders by Indians occurred in the area. The most sensational was the capture of 3 children from the Lewis family on July 5<sup>th</sup> in Messilla Valley. Thankful Lewis and her two brothers were taken while walking home from school. The two brothers were later killed but Thankful Lewis escaped. The killing of the two children was a lightning rod that sparked an outcry from the people in Pence.

Soon after, a group of men went to Yankee Hill to take revenge on the Indians from the nearby area. When the Concow Valley Indians were rounded up in 1859, the Indians in the area of Yankee Hill and Shield's Gulch were not disturbed. Probably because the roundup was a surprise to most in Butte County, lasting less than 2 weeks, and followed the West Branch of the Feather River crossing at Nelson Bar to return to Chico, avoiding Yankee Hill. Also some people in Yankee Hill area were sympathetic to the Indians there, offering no support to the operation. M.H. Wells, owner of the Yankee Hill store and the Justice of the Peace, was one. Another was Alfred Burr Clark, a prominent resident of Yankee Hill who had taken an Indian Chief's daughter, Yo-he-ma, as his wife in an Indian ceremony in 1859 while a miner at Island Bar (located below Shields Gulch, 1 mile east of Dark Canyon). Both men had been in the Yankee Hill area since the mid 1850's and had associated with the Indians for several years.



**Alfred Burr Clark**  
3 Mar 1822 - 16 Aug 1906



**Yohema (Kate) Clark**  
Winter 1845 - 19 April 1909

When the group seeking revenge came to Yankee Hill, Wells hid a group of 40 to 50 Indians in the basement of his store. At first denying he was hiding any Indians, Mr. Wells later was forced to admit they were there. He argued with the men that these Indians were not to blame for the Lewis children's capture and murder and said he would charge all the men with murder if they hurt any of them. Wells was joined by Mr. Clark before long. Eventually, Wells agreed to let the men examine the Indians and stated if any were identified as guilty of crimes he would let them have them. The Indians were lined up outside Well's store. After a two hour examination and interrogation 4 were identified as Indians causing problems. The four were taken aside and were tied together in pairs by their hands. They were told to run as the men prepared

to shoot them. Two were killed and two escaped by running back into the crowd, using the crowd to cover their escape. After the killing of the two Indians the men left, leaving the rest of the Indians alone.



STORE AND RESIDENCE OF M.H.WELLS, in 1882

*YANKEE HILL, BUTTE CO. CAL.*

**Yankee Hill Store on left, Wells' home on right**

Monument on Yankee Hill Road donated by Florence Smith Wilson currently marks the site

Shortly after this, Mr. Wells asked the Chief of the Indians nearby to visit him. The Indians were the Chees-sees, their Chief was Uh-le-ma. This is presumed to be the same Indians that were at Shield's Gulch in 1859. Uh-le-ma's story was also told in the 1884 article in the Overland Monthly. At the meeting with Mr. Wells he was told the tribe's only chance was to go to Chico landing and join the rest of the Concow Indians who had been encamped there for the last year. Uh-le-ma, stated he would lead his people from Yankee Hill to Chico. Recent unrest had resulted in hostilities perpetrated against the Indians in the area. The Chief said they hid out in the area surrounding Chico until they felt it was safe to appear.

On July 27<sup>th</sup>, three weeks after the killing of the Lewis Boys, a meeting was held at Pence's ranch. Three hundred people attended from all over Butte County. The crowd was concerned about the large group of Indians living near Chico for the last year since leaving the reservation and the rest of the Indians still roaming around in the immediate area. The following report was made:

**Whereas.** The Indians within the county of Butte have committed acts of depredations, and have at different times committed murder on unoffending and innocent men, women and children of said county; therefore the People of Butte county, in mass meeting assembled.

**Resolve: 1st** That we hold the preservation of the lives and property of ourselves and families as the first and most important consideration, and that means should be devised for removal of all Indians from our midst.

**2d.** That we shall require the removal of every Indian from this county to some distant reservation.

**3d.** That we give all Indians thirty days' time to come into the settlements, will protect and forward the same to any point designated.

**4th.** That any Indians who shall, after their removal return to this county, do so at the risk of their lives

**5th.** That what we mean by every Indian, are those that are roaming in our mountains, as well as those upon the ranches in the valleys.

**6th.** That the Indians shall be notified by persons appointed by this meeting to collect them; that all found in this county after the expiration of thirty days, shall be killed at sight.

Among those appointed to collect the Indians from this area were Mr. Wells of Yankee Hill and Thomas McDonald of Cherokee. Among those appointed to collect funds to defray the costs of the removal in this area were G.G. Marquis of Concow, Mr. Pence from Messilla Valley and B.P. Hutchinson from Cherokee Flat and John Chapman from Cherokee Ravine. It is interesting to note that a total of 12 people were appointed to collect the Indians in Butte County and 26 people were appointed to collect money from all of Butte County to cover expenses. Bidwell and the Chico Indians, the Mechoopda, are not mentioned on the report filed in the Butte County newspapers. On Aug 15 a letter was posted in the Butte papers asking for information from the agent from Chico Township on disposition of the Indians in his township and immediate area.

Mr. Hanson, Superintending Agent of Indian Affairs, Northern District California, attended the meeting at Pence's ranch on July 27th. He reported back to the Bureau of Indians Affairs what had transpired. On 9-5-1863 it was reported in the Oroville papers that he was authorized up to 150 men to remove the Indians from the mountains and told not to disturb the Indians in the valley. This removed the burden to finance the operation from those that met at Pence's Ranch.

In a report to Agent Hanson, filed in August 1863 by Sub Agent Eddy, who was in charge of the large group of Concow and Hat Creek Indians encamped near Chico Landing for the last year, he stated that he had leased out some Indians as workers for a \$1.00 per day to help cover expenses for their upkeep. Agent Eddy reported that three boys, named Dick, Pike and Charley from the Concow tribe along with 1 squaw and 1 girl about 10 years old were killed and robbed when returning from work for Mr. Isaac Allen, a former senator. They had been working on his thresher machine near Missouri Bend, above Hamilton City. They had a passport which was given to working Indians as well as one from Mr. Allen. They were all killed on a slough nearby when they started walking back to Chico and their bodies were dumped in an old cabin. Two of the boys had been with Mr. Eddy all winter; the others came to him about a month earlier. He stated he would use all means to ascertain the parties, but their arrest would require a strong military force, as this is "the most inflammatory district we have". Agent Eddy also reported that Mr. Wells had on the day of his report delivered 60 Indians from the Concow Valley (other sources say these were elderly and the sick, it is presumed they were delivered by wagon).

In a report filed at Pence's Ranch, Mr. Wells was credited with rounding up 220 Indians in the Yankee Hill and Concow area, another 53 were rounded up near Cherokee. Some of these Indians probably were part of the Concow Indians returning to the Chico area a year before who had left the encampment near Chico

to return to their local village sites. For them this was their second roundup.

The gathering point for the Indians was to be Camp Bidwell, a newly established command post for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Cavalry consisting of 23 men and an officer. I could find no record of troops rounding up Indians in Yankee Hill, Concow or Cherokee in September 1863, only the efforts by Mr. Wells. This implies that the Indians who returned to Chico Landing did so voluntarily, as Chief Uh-le-ma stated, because of fear for their safety if they stayed in Yankee Hill.



2010 map showing sites mentioned in this article in red

### **The Tragic March to Round Valley**

On June 17<sup>th</sup> Agent Hanson reported 350 Hat Creek and Con-cow Indians remained near Chico from those arriving last year (1862) that needed to be transferred to Round Valley.

On August 10<sup>th</sup> Capt. Augustus Starr, reported the number had grown to between 500 and 600. Captain Star was with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Cavalry. He and his men were assigned to assist Sub Agent Eddy in transporting the Indians to Round Valley.

On August 21, 1863 Agent Hanson, who attended the meeting at Pence’s ranch, reported from Round Valley he had been purchasing supplies for the additional Indians that would be moved from “Butte County

to this place”. “You will see at once the urgent necessity of their immediate removal, and consequently the importance of providing at this time for their subsistence through the approaching winter. Should I not remove these Indians immediately, there can be no doubt but an effort to carry out the resolutions so unanimously adopted at the large meeting held at “Pierces ranch” (this should be Pence’s ranch) a copy of the notice of which I have enclose you, will be made, and the consequence would be a bloody affair.”

On September 4, 1863 Captain Starr and his men led the Indians on a two week march to Round Valley. Evidence suggests many of the Indians were sick before the march started. On their return his report stated “In compliance with post orders no. 6 & 7, left Camp Bidwell, Butte, California, September 4, 1863, having under my command twenty-three men and horses of Company F, second cavalry, California Volunteers, and four hundred and sixty-one Indians, to remove to Indian reservation at Round Valley, Mendocino County, California, arriving there September 18, 1863, with two hundred and seventy-seven Indians. Left one hundred and fifty on east side of the mountains, they being unable to travel. Thirty-two died en route and two escaped”

Later investigation showed they had 14 wagons to transport the Indians to Laycock Ranch which marked about 1/3 of the way on the 100 mile plus journey. Most of the wagons probably were furnished by Bidwell. At that point the wagons were returned to Chico. A pack train was supposed to meet the group at Laycock Ranch but it was late so Captain Starr had the Indians walk about three miles to Mountain House. When the pack train arrived at Mountain House, some Indians were put on mules and the children in 1 wagon, the rest had to walk. 150 Indians were in poor health and unable to travel so they were left at Mountain House with agent Eddy. Meanwhile at Lot Springs, just past the ½ way point, the lone wagon was returned and a few children were put on mules but most had to walk the rest of the way to Round Valley, nearly 50 miles.

When Captain Douglas at Fort Wright in Mendocino County heard the 150 Indians left behind were dying along the trail, he ordered Round Valley’s Superintendent, James Short to bring the Indians in to the reservation. For 13 days Short worked to bring in a portion of the Indians. He reported that “about 150 sick Indians were scattered across the trail for 50 miles, dying at a rate of 2 to 3 per day. They had nothing to eat....and wild hogs were eating them up either before or after they were dead.”

After the September 1863 removal of the Indians from Concow and Yankee Hill things were quiet for a time. The 2<sup>nd</sup> cavalry made a sweep with 19 men through Yankee Hill, Cherokee, Pentz, Oregon City and Oroville in November 1863 rounding up 28 more Indians, taking them to Camp Bidwell, near Chico and on to Round Valley via Tehama County on the 28<sup>th</sup> of November.

### **Indians Returning**

On March 5, 1864 the Oroville Union Record reported that numerous Indians had started returning from the reservation to the mountains outside Dogtown (Magalia) and Nimshew. It was also reported a letter was received from the reservation agent that the Indians were about to return. Lack of food, harassment by whites and no real military support made forcing the Indians to stay on the reservation difficult.

It is unclear as to what the final number was of Concow/Yankee Hill Indians who were taken to Round Valley. But the annual report filed September 1, 1864 by the Superintendent of Indian Affairs, California reported 325 Concow and Yankee Hill Indians still at Round Valley Indian Reservation, 125 male and 200 female.

**Note:** It is true some Indians left the reservation. Reviewing the numbers given by various sources for the Concow Indians population offers another possibility for the increase in Indian population in the Dogtown

and Nimsheew areas. The 1882 the History of Butte County reported that in 1856 local residents named the Concow Valley after the tribe of Indians from the area numbering nearly 700. In 1859 when captured, Chief Yum yan reported the number of Indians in the area as nearly 1,000. At the time Yumyan was captured with the Chiefs of the Tiger Indians (Near Magalia) and the Kimsheew (above Concow Valley) so it can be assumed these tribes populations were part of the 1,000 figure. Round Valley never reported more the 325 Concow Indians in their census. There were no Tiger or Kimsheew Indians identified in the Round Valley census, they were all listed as Concow Indians. There were never any reported killings of large numbers of Indians in this immediate area. It is true there were a large number of Concow Indians who died on the march to Round Valley, possibly as many as 100. There still is a discrepancy of at least 200 to 400 Indians from this area who are not accounted for. More than likely these Indians retreated to the high country, perhaps Grassy Lake, the Concow summer home and were never rounded up. Some may have joined other tribes. Some of these Indians may have tried to return to the former homes near Dogtown and Nimsheew north of Concow Valley in 1864 when things were quieting down.

### **Trouble in Concow Valley in 1865**

On August 12, 1865 the Oroville Union Record reported “Indian Massacre at Concow Valley – Terrible Excitement.” Five Indians approached the home of Robert Workman, a miner on Monday August 7<sup>th</sup>, in Concow Valley while he was away from home. His wife, her sister Mary Rosanna Smith, visiting from Australia and a hired hand John Banks were at home. The Indians knocked on the door and when it was opened Mrs. Workman saw a gun pointed at her chest, upon which all three, Mrs. Workman, Miss Smith and John Banks ran out the back door. Outside they were met by more Indians who shot John banks and killed Miss Smith by the barn, cutting her throat. Both were scalped and mutilated. Mrs. Workman was badly beaten and left for dead. Sometime later Mrs. Workman regained consciousness and made her way to G. G. Marquis’s house 600 feet away (located in present day Camelot). Mrs. Marquis was home and attended to Mrs. Workman. There were but four men in the valley at the time as most were at Oroville attending the Union County Convention.

A man was dispatched to the Porter Quartz Mill (located on Jordan Hill) where 30 people were working and sounded the alarm. Mr. Porter and 15 men left to investigate and found a gathering of people at the home of William Mullen (near the present site of the Concow Camp Ground). “They instantly decided upon a course of warfare, to spare neither Indian nor Mahala white man” (Mahala was a term used for Indian women. In this context this refers to a Whiteman who had married an Indian. The term “squaw man” was more commonly used).

On August 9<sup>th</sup>, 1865 after the burial of Mrs. Workman’s sister Miss Smith and the hired hand John Banks, a party set out to find the responsible Indians. On August 20<sup>th</sup> a lengthy report was filed by Daniel Klauberg, a miner in Yankee Hill who joined the search, in the Oroville Union Record describing some of the events that followed. Some of this information that follows also comes from the book “Fighting the Mill Creeks” by R.A. Anderson, published in 1909 and “The Last of The Mill Creeks and Early Life in Northern California”, by Sim Moak published in 1923 (The two books can be found on line for free using Google search).

On Thursday August 10<sup>th</sup> the group reached Butte Mills about 25 miles away, where they had camped for the night. On Friday August 11<sup>th</sup> the group from Concow/Yankee Hill met up with Robert Anderson, a noted Indian fighter. Initially the group from Concow and Yankee Hill were going after Bidwell’s Indians convinced they had committed the murders. Anderson, based on his experiences, convinced them it was the Mill Creek Indians who were responsible. Anderson convinced the others to follow him to Hiram Good’s farm on Deer Creek in Tehama County. Good was also a noted Indian fighter in the area. Anderson and “Hi

Good” as he was called had worked together against the Mill Creek Indians in the past. There, on Friday afternoon, they met up with several others from the Concow/Yankee Hill area. Sim Moak also joined the group, traveling from Durham where he was working. Hi Good took command of the group. The next day, Saturday the 11<sup>th</sup>, 16 men headed 15 miles up Deer Creek and an additional 10 miles beyond when they came upon an Indian camp with only women in camp. They discovered a cave nearby with a “splendid saddle and bridle and the remains of a horse, which these Indian Bandits had no doubt taken” along with a shawl. Apparently no harm was done to the Indian women in camp as there is no mention of it in any of the three published accounts. Sunday the 13<sup>th</sup> the group headed towards Mill Creek Canyon. There they ran across the trail of Indians traveling very slowly, as if in no danger. They discovered an Indian scout later that day. Good and Anderson went out to look for the rest of the Indians while the others ate in the tall grass. Two hours later Good and Anderson returned, that night at 10:00 o’clock the group moved to a ridge above the Indian camp. Good crawled to the Indian camp to see the exact location, returning later that night. At day break the next day, Monday the 14<sup>th</sup>, they formed into two lines marching towards the camp, Good with one group and Anderson with the other. They stopped and laid in wait for about 10 minutes when Good fired the first shot killing a buck. The Indians were completely surprised and broke for a ford (in the creek) in great confusion. The group ran up within 25 yards and all guns started firing as the Indians were leaving the other side of the creek. Daniel Klauberg reported in the Orville Union that “the Indians began to fall thick and fast, some rolling down into the creek and floating off: others crawling into the brush.”.... “there were about twenty-five Indians; we left five Indians killed on the spot, and as many as six or seven who will surely die, and they are nearly all wounded more or less.” In the Indian camp Klauberg reported “we found but a few of the articles that had been taken; they had mostly been left, probably somewhere in the edge of the foothills or in caves on Deer Creek”. They found a portion of Mrs. Workman’s dress, some silk and other articles later identified by Mrs. Workman as hers. They also found a rifle and a colt revolver. Tuesday the 15<sup>th</sup>, 1865 the group headed home, being out of provisions, stopping at Pine Creek. A gentleman gave them a ride to Mud Creek where Bidwell’s team met them taking them to Chico where they were given a free meal. From there they all dispersed.

Anderson reported in his 1909 book, “Fighting the Mill Creeks”, that some of the Concow people were “intensely wrought up” after seeing the atrocities committed on Mrs. Workman’s sister’s body and the body of the hired hand. Both Robert Anderson and Sim Moak reported the Concow men mutilated some of the dead. They also talked of English coins, worth about \$1600 belonging to Miss Smith being taken from the Workman home as well as Workman’s stash of gold dust. Sim Moak talked of Miss Smith bringing fine silks and shawls with her from Australia. They found strips of the material pinned to the Indian squaw’s shoulders.

### **Spanishtown Meeting to Remove all the Indians from the Concow Valley**

On Saturday Sept 12<sup>th</sup> 1865, a meeting was held at Spanishtown (located near the intersection of Pinkston Canyon and Concow Roads). This was three days after the group had left Concow Valley headed towards Mill Creek. At that meeting a proclamation was issued similar to the one issued at Pence in 1863.

**Resolved**, That this meeting will guarantee protection to no Indian after the first day of September next, and those living with squaws must govern themselves accordingly; provided that no peaceable Indian be disturbed until after the 1<sup>st</sup> of September.

**Resolved**, That this meeting appoint a Captain, and entrust him to raise sufficient men for protection in the enforcement of these resolutions, using great discretion as to who shall be members of said company

**Resolved**, That we appoint a committee of five as a committee of observation, whose duty it shall be

to report to the Captain all matters pertaining to the general protection and welfare of this community in regard to Indians, and to solicit funds by contribution in case expenses should be incurred by the company.

**Resolved,** That a Committee of Three be appointed to consult with the Indians of this community to induce them to leave as soon as possible, and certainly by the 1<sup>st</sup> of September.

### **Tensions in Butte County Continue**

After the report back on August 20<sup>th</sup> by Daniel Klauberg in the Oroville Union on the Indian hunt there was no more mention of this group who met at Spanishtown or their proclamation. It is worth noting the location for the meeting was Spanishtown, not Yankee Hill, a popular meeting place just down the road, where Henry Wells, the Justice of The Peace and Alfred Clark lived, both as mentioned earlier, were sympathizers with the Indian's plight.

***The Oroville Union Record of Sept 2, 1865: Successful Hunt*** – “The late Indian hunt, under charge of Captain Good, was probably the most successful one ever made in this state. It is evident from numerous articles found upon the trail and also in the cave, that the Indians killed were the ones that committed the outrages at Concow Valley, and we are reliably informed that out of the whole number, sixteen, only four Indians made their escape.”

On Sept 23, 1865 the Oroville paper reported that an Indian woman at Big Meadows (now under Lake Almanor) said she was with the Indians at Mill Creek. They made the trip from Mill Creek to the Concow Valley in 5 days. After the attack at Mill Creek, several Indians made their escape and returned to a cave where they dug up the rest of the artifacts from the raid, money, watches and jewelry. She said the party contained 16 bucks of which 8 escaped. She had hidden in the tall grass during the fight.

That same paper reported that out of fear a number of people intended to leave the Concow Valley, it appears that did not happen.

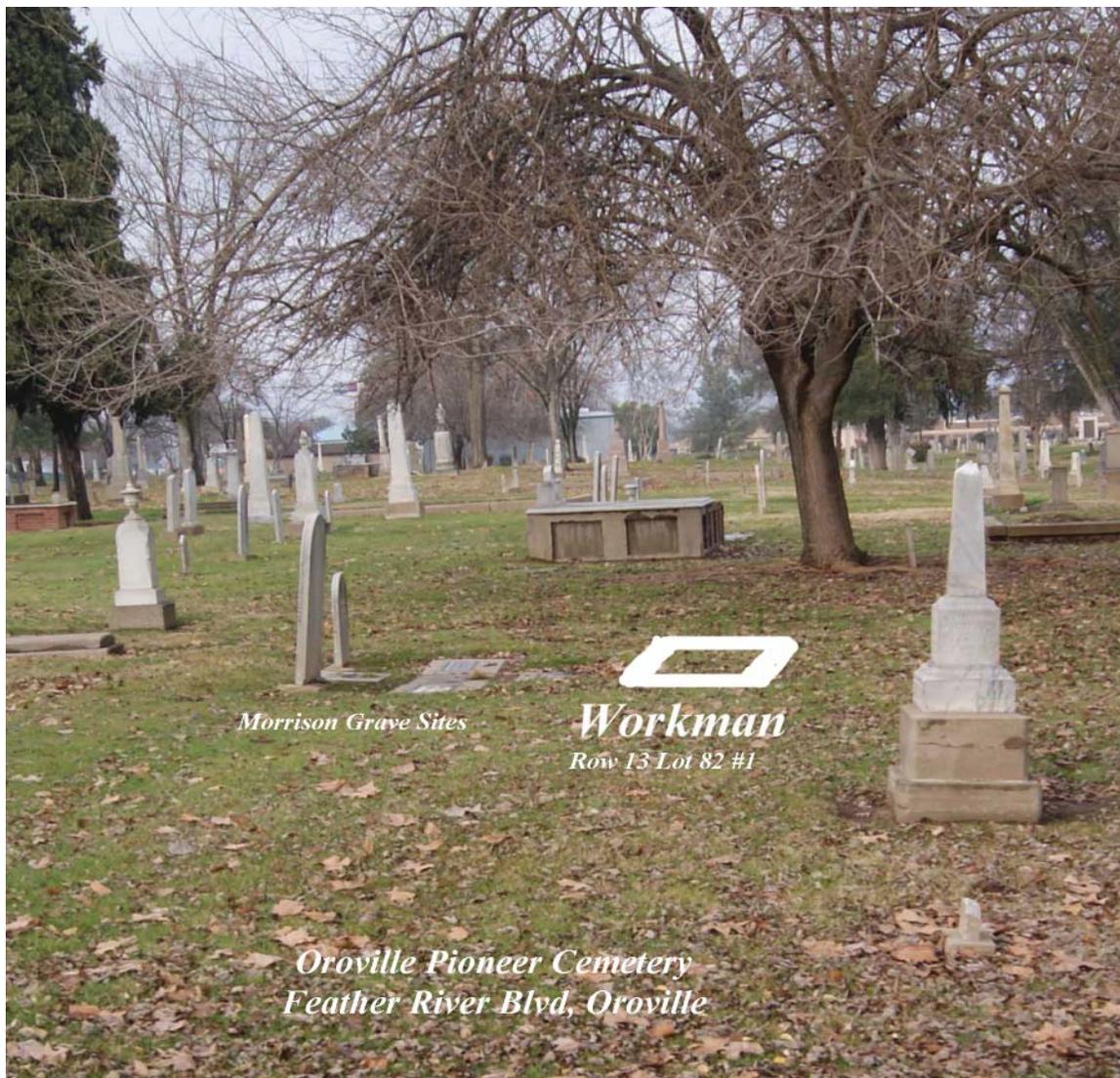
### **When will it End?**

An article in the 1866 Oroville Union brings the Workman tragedy to a close, but it also sums up the general frustration about the White and Indian relations going forward. The article defines the problem but sees no viable solution, a feeling felt by many. The article in its entirety is below.

***The Union Record, February 24, 1866:*** “Five Indians killed: We learn that, on Sunday morning last, four Indians were killed, one mortally and one slightly wounded, on Clear creek between Cherokee Flat and Wicks' ranch. Of course, it is not positively known by whom they were killed; but we have heard the following particulars: A party of eight or nine Indians were camped on Clear creek, engaged in fishing. It was supposed that two Indians, Dogskin and his son, concerned in the massacre of Workman's family at Concow valley, on the 7th of August last, were in this fishing party; and certain white men went to the camp and demanded that the two Indians should be given up. This was refused, the Indians showing a disposition to fight, when they were fired upon, and Dogskin and his son, Oregon City Charley, and a Berry Creek Indian, killed upon the spot, one of the Cherokee tribe mortally wounded and since dead, and the squaw of Oregon City Charley shot in the face and thigh and severely but not fatally wounded. One or two of the Indians escaped. In a short time after the fight, we are told that a large party of Indians from this side of the river arrived on the scene, and carried off the dead to this side for burial, amidst cries and lamentations. This is a lamentable state of affairs for the mountain settlements, and involves the alternative of either extermination of all Indians in this county, or a very different reservation system

from that at present in operation. We have good authority for the statement that Indians are continually going to and from the Nome Lackee Reservation, and mixing with the Indians who remain in this county; and it is said that the Concow Indians, taken to the Reservation for the second time two or three years ago, are now nearly all back here, and mixed through the different tribes who have remained on the south side of the river. If these Indians remain here, under the present circumstances, the fiendish massacres of past years will be re-enacted year after year, followed by expeditions against the Indians, some of whom will be killed and the rest driven off, to return again when the excitement quiets down. This must be the case, unless the mountain settlements keep a force on their trail continually, and that is impracticable.”

The Workman killings and the resulting Indian deaths were the last major clashes between the two cultures in Butte County. Probably because one of the Indians killed at the time was believed to be Big Foot, so called because he had six toes on one foot. Big Foot was a known renegade Indian in 1863 leading a small group from Mill Creek that caused trouble in Butte and Plumas Counties, similar to the Indian Shave Head and his people in 1859.



**Note:** The 1882 and 1918 History of Butte County reports that Mrs. Workman died 2 years later, never fully recovering from the stress of her ordeal. She actually died 2 months later, on October 1, 1865 and is buried in an unmarked grave in the Oroville Cemetery, in the Catholic section on Feather River Blvd. It

appears Mr. Workman had no funds left for a headstone for his wife, a devout Catholic. The history books also do not report that Mrs. Workman was pregnant. The Workman's 3 week old daughter died 4 days after her mother on October 5th. It is interesting to note that Mrs. Workman was not scalped or mutilated like the others during the attack but instead left for dead with a large rock thrown on her chest. It is unknown where Mrs. Workman's daughter and sister, Miss Smith, and John Banks are buried. It is presumed they were buried near the Workman home.

### **Conclusion**

The white/Indian relationships were complicated in Butte County. Prior to 1863 there had been a tolerable if not friendly, relationship between the miners and the Indians dating back to the early 1850's, probably out of necessity because there was such a large Indian population, especially in this area, and the miners were not organized, neither group could dominate the other. This may also be why some of the Indians in this area, as an example the Concow Chief, spoke English. Or it may be because Sutter in 1849 released his Hawaiian (Kanaka) workers, some had been with him for 10 years, when he sold Sutter's Fort for \$7,000. Several of the Kanaka came to this area and took Indian brides.

There were whites at the time that were sympathetic to the Indians' condition despite the cultural differences and in some cases having experienced firsthand traumatic clashes. Mr. Wells who defended the Indians at his store in Yankee Hill in 1863 was a member of a wagon train attacked in Oregon by Indians six months prior to his arrival in California in 1856; nearly half the train, 70 people were killed. Robert Workman left the Concow Valley in 1870 and founded a mining claim on the Feather River later known as Workman's Bar (Now Rock Creek PG&E site on highway 70). In 1875 he met an Indian woman with a claim farther up river named Susan Belden. Her husband Charles Belden had died several years earlier in San Francisco while recovering from illness. The Belden's had two boys Charles Jr. and Robert. Robert Workman and Susan also had a child together, William. Robert Workman died in April 1896 at the county hospital in Plumas County. William Workman died while mining near Oroville at Longs Bar in June 1898. Susan, as part of a homestead settlement with the Federal Government was awarded land on the Feather River, it was her tribal home. Her son by her first marriage, Charles Jr., built a hotel on the land in the early 1900's; the Belden Hotel was named in honor of his mother. Susan died in 1919 and is buried high on the hill across the road on Highway 70 from the hotel. Susan's brother Jim donated land, part of his mining and homestead claim, for the Indian Jim School, now closed on highway 70. Family tradition has it that Susan's and Jim's mother was from a tribe located near Yankee Hill.

In 1893, in an effort to close the Round Valley Reservation, the adult Indians that lived on reservation at the time, including 152 Concow Indians (78 males and 74 females) 70 of whom were alive in 1863 during the forced march from Chico to Round Valley, were each given a land allotment; males were given 10 acres and females 5 acres.

In the Concow Valley the Clark families, the Pinkston families and in Pulga the Gramps families along with their descendants, have a long history with this area and are well respected families with Indian lineage making an important contribution to their family's heritage.

### **The Sad Truth**

The California reservation system, run by the Federal Government, never lived up to the expectations of the whites or the Indians. The yearly reports to Congress by the Commissioner of Indian Affairs in California repeatedly ask for more money for the reservation system and talk of the injustices done upon the Indians by whites. The whites, especially ranchers, continued to severely punish the Indians for their actions in

stealing food and provisions, the punishment usually far harsher than the crime deserved. The practice of killing Indian children or kidnapping them and selling them as vagrants to white families was seldom reported in the newspapers. When Indians started to retaliate by killing whites, the reaction was swift and harsh. A few Indians, Shave Head, Big Foot and others who tried to fight back were probably secretly considered heroes by their brothers. But once the Indians started to retaliate and kill whites, especially children, the retaliation by whites was considered justifiable and openly reported in the newspapers. It was only after the population was severely reduced and the Indian spirit broken that the hostilities subsided. For years afterward many families hid their Indian heritage and did not talk about it with their children. This has caused a gap in the knowledge of their history and rich culture which their descendants are now working to rediscover.

In the end, the sudden and massive influx of a new people in a new land and the inadequacy or lack of resolve of those governing the area to cope with the diversity and clash of cultures, made the resulting genocide inevitable, a problem that still exists in parts of the world today.



Indians, Cherokee, Circa 1899  
Courtesy of Meriam Library Special Collections

# *Local History Talk*

by Larry Mauch

**Saturday, Oct 1st, 11:00am**

**Location Old School House  
at Concow and Nelson Bar Roads off highway 70**

**45 minute presentation with maps - photos  
Covers four years research on**

Concow Valley  
Flea Valley  
Frenchtown  
Rich Gulch  
Spanishtown  
Yankee Hill

**With References to**

Belden, Cherokee, Oregon City, Pentz, and Pulga

\$3.00 donation for members and \$5.00 donation for non members  
includes hot dog, potato salad, cookies and refreshments at 12:00pm

(There will be a short election of officers before lunch, members encouraged to vote)

***Sponsored by Yankee Hill Historical Society***

***You are welcome to stay for our bi-monthly, Saturday Bunko  
(Funds support the Old School and our research and archives)***

**1:00pm with prizes, \$6.00 donation**

# YHHS Happenings

**Saturday Oct 1st, Local History Talk 11 am,** Larry Mauch will give a 45 minute talk and slide show about local history at the old school house. Larry has spent the last four years researching this area's history. Topics include Rich Gulch, Frenchtown, Spanishtown, Yankee Hill, Cherokee and Pence as well as the Concow Indians. A charge of \$3.00 for members and \$5.00 for non-members will be collected at the door. Included in the charge is a lunch at noon consisting of a hot dog, potato salad, macaroni salad, punch and cookies. A brief election of officers for the next year will be held before lunch. Attendees are welcome to stay for Bunko at 1:00pm

***Bunko Party!!*** - **Oct 1st and Dec 3rd** at 1:00pm we have a bunko party at the old school. Prizes and a raffle are held to raise funds for the school restoration and other projects. SEE YOU THERE!

***New Outdoor Portable Display*** - We recently enhanced our ability to have outdoor displays on local history. We made two folding easels and mounted several displays that can be interchanged for different events. More displays will be mounted soon. We also purchased an outdoor gazebo for shade. We put them to use at the Wild Mountain Fair at the campground where we manned a booth.

***New Marquee for the Old School*** - We are currently installing a new marquee in front of the old school house to announce events and happenings. The roof and lights will be installed in two weeks and then colored graphics added saying "Yankee Hill Historical Society" for the top.

## **Officers and Contact Information**

**President:** *Bob Huffman (530) 533-4132*

**Vice President:** *Patty Dummel*

**Treasurer:** *Debbie Ingvoldsen*

**Secretary:** *Don Saul*

**Director:** *Marji Corey*

**Newsletter Editor:** *Larry Mauch (530) 532-0706 editor@yankeehillhistory.com*

**General Correspondence:** *information@yankeehillhistory.com*

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*“Dedicated to Preserving Our Local History”*  
Visit Our Web Page @ [www.yankeehillhistory.com](http://www.yankeehillhistory.com)