



"THE TISH-RÁWA VILLAGE, AND THE KLAMATH, BELOW THE ENTRANCE
OF THE SALMON"

Drawn by Capt. Seth Eastman, from original sketch by George Gibbs,
October 1851.

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DRAWINGS BY GEORGE GIBBS IN
THE FAR NORTHWEST,
1849-1851

(WITH 18 PLATES)

BY
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INTRODUCTION

George Gibbs, whose drawings form the subject of this article, was born July 17, 1815, at Sunswick, Long Island, New York, near the present Astoria. He died in 1873. At the age of 17, failing to receive the desired appointment to West Point, he accompanied an aunt to Europe, where he devoted 2 years to travel and study. Returning to New York, he soon entered Harvard, where he was graduated in law in 1838, and subsequently entered the law office of Preston Hall. However, the profession did not appeal to him, and during the next few years he wrote several works on historical subjects which were highly acclaimed.

The Far West was now becoming of interest, and the mystery of the wilderness appealed to many. Gibbs was among those who were thus attracted, and in 1849 he accompanied the Mounted Rifle Regiment to Oregon, where he arrived early in October. That same autumn he became deputy collector of customs at Astoria and was later attached to the Indian Commission in Oregon. In 1851 he was a member of the McKee party and visited the northwestern part of California. During the journey he learned much concerning the various native tribes with whom he came in contact, especially those who were encountered in the valley of the Klamath. Later he settled near Fort Steilacoom, Washington, where he devoted much time to the study of the languages of the different tribes and prepared extensive vocabularies which, together with brief lists of words, are now in the Smithsonian Institution. Although interested primarily in linguistic studies, Gibbs collected ethnological material, much of which is preserved in the collections of the National Museum, being among the earliest specimens gathered in the country beyond the Rocky Mountains.

Gibbs was preparing to return to New York and so wrote to his friend, Prof. S. F. Baird of the Smithsonian Institution: "North West Boundary Survey, Fort Walla-Walla, Nov. 16, 1860. I arrived

here yesterday on my way to Washington." He next wrote to Prof. Baird from "261 Greene Street, New York, Feb. 5, 1861," soon after he reached his home.

The correspondence between Gibbs and Professor Baird continued through many years, both while Gibbs was in the west and after his return to New York, and later when he lived in Washington. The letters are most interesting, and many refer, in addition to the work in which both were engaged, to places and persons now known only in history.

WITH THE MOUNTED RIFLE REGIMENT TO OREGON, 1849

As previously mentioned, Gibbs accompanied the Mounted Rifle Regiment to Oregon in 1849, being one of many civilians who reached the valley of the Columbia at that time.¹ The regiment was under command of Brevet-Col. W. W. Loring, and the expedition started "with about 600 men, 31 commissioned officers, several women and children, the usual train agents, guides, and teamsters, 160 wagons, 1,200 mules, 700 horses, and subsistence for the march to the Pacific."

An interesting account of the trip has been preserved;² it was presented as (p. 126): "A report, in the form of a journal, to the Quartermaster General, of the march of the regiment of mounted riflemen to Oregon, from May 10 to October 5, 1849, by Major O. Cross, quartermaster United States army."

Excerpts from the journal will shed light on the dangers and difficulties with which all were confronted:

Major Cross left St. Louis May 10, 1849, and ascended the Missouri to Fort Leavenworth where he arrived 9 days later. "On inquiring at the fort I learned that the troops were ten days in advance of me, which was a very long start, as my mode of travelling was the same as that of the regiment." The next day he left for Fort Kearny. "My outfit was as indifferent a one as ever left for any station, much less the Rocky mountains."

It is not known with which of the groups Gibbs was then traveling, but he was probably with the troops that had left Fort Leavenworth about the time Cross was departing from St. Louis.

¹ Bancroft, Hubert Howe, *The works of . . .* vol. 30, *History of Oregon*, vol. 2, 1848-1888, p. 81. San Francisco, 1888.

² The report was made by Maj. Osborne Cross to Maj. Gen. T. S. Jesup, Quartermaster General, and was incorporated in the report of the latter to C. M. Conrad, Secretary of War. 31st Congr., 2d Sess., Senate Ex. Doc. No. 1, pt. 2, Washington, 1850.

Again the journal (p. 143): "*June 5.*—Large trains could be seen this morning wending their way along on both sides of the Platte. The river here is nearly three miles wide, interspersed with islands, some of which are thinly covered with very small cottonwood and willow." That day the wagons, 160 in number, were overhauled and many were repaired.

June 7.—"To-day buffalo were seen for the first time, which created no little excitement."

June 19.—"I visited Chimney Rock this morning, as the command wended its way along the river."

June 22.—Arrived at Fort Laramie. "Fort Laramie is situated on Laramie's creek, a rapid stream, about 60 yards wide, with a firm, pebbly bottom. This stream rises among the Black Hills to the west, and falls into the North Platte, about half a mile below the fort.

"This fort is built in the form of a quadrangular figure, and of unbaked clay, or adobes; the wall is about twenty feet high, with a small palisading on a part of it. There are two block-houses at the corners, diagonally from each other . . . Over the main entrance, which faces the river, there is also another small block-house. The buildings are made inside, the wall forming a part of them." There were no trees about the fort. Game was formerly plentiful, but "has greatly diminished since emigrants have made it the great thoroughfare to Oregon and California." Fort Laramie is 639 miles from Fort Leavenworth.

August 1.—"It was at the side of the river, and at this place, that I saw the celebrated spring generally known as the Steamboat spring . . . This place is immediately at the point where the two trails turn off for California and Oregon, and within a short distance of the Salt lake . . ."

August 4.—"We descended a long hill, which brought us into a sandy plain, which extends to Fort Hall, and on the banks of the Port Neuf . . ."

August 10.—"Our encampment last evening seemed to be the terminus of Snake River valley, as the appearance of the river entirely changed after a march of about five miles, which brought us to the American falls . . . The scene was truly magnificent . . ." Many rapids in the river, islands and masses of rock in the stream.

August 11.—"We crossed Ogden's river about 12 o'clock. The road turns off to the south for California, which was taken by the Californians who were still along . . ."

August 15.—A day of much interest for Gibbs. Left camp at 4 in the morning and, as the journal continues (p. 196):

We travelled, however, rapidly for about eight miles . . . until we arrived at the creek again. At this place we waited for our wagons, which soon came up; and, having assisted them out of the cañon, which was no easy work, we continued on until the middle of the day, when we again came to the banks of the river, which were at least two or three hundred feet in height. I attempted to descend into the valley through which the river ran, for the purpose of procuring water, but it was so fatiguing, both for myself and horse, that I returned without being able to accomplish it.

It was at this place we could easily hear the sound of a waterfall, which, from the noise, we at first supposed might have been the Little Falls of Snake river; but, as we were still twenty miles from that point, we were soon satisfied that it did not proceed from there, or the small cascade on the opposite bank, which is mentioned by Colonel Fremont as the Subterranean river; and we were much surprised to learn, the next day, that within ten miles of this place there is a cascade, which, in height, is not surpassed by the Niagara Falls. The guide, who was with the command, having travelled this route very often, was shown the place by an Indian, and took Mr. Gibbs, of New York, and Lieutenant Lindsay to the place, who pronounced it one of nature's great wonders. The river here becomes a little contracted, and passes through a chasm of solid rock; it commences to fall about a quarter of a mile above the last pitch, and, after forcing itself among loose rocks which lay in its way, takes a perpendicular pitch of at least 160 feet, and it is even thought to be a greater height. They descended to the foot of the falls, and after much difficulty and some length of time, where they were better able to judge more accurately of its great height; and there seems to be but one opinion, that it equalled in grandeur, in proportion to the column of water, the Niagara Falls. Having been the first who had ever taken the trouble to examine them carefully, and wishing to change the name said to have been given by a priest many years since, they decided on that of the Great Shoshonie falls, instead of Canadian, as being the most appropriate.

The road does not pass there, and probably its nearest point is not less than eight or ten miles, which is probably the reason why it is so little known, for I have never seen it mentioned by those who have trapped in this country for years . . .

We continued our journey until sundown, when we came to the foot of the little falls on Snake river, commonly called the Little Salmon Falls, and encamped for the night immediately on the banks of the river.

The drawings of the falls made by Gibbs that day are reproduced in plate 2. This was the first mention of Gibbs by Major Cross.

The expedition continued through the mountains until (p. 210):

September 4.—Mountains were to be seen all around, and it appeared a mystery how we had extricated ourselves from those left behind us with so little difficulty, or how we were to pass those ahead of us. This brought us again on Burntwood creek, where we encamped for the night . . .

The ravine through which the Burntwood passes is too narrow to be cultivated, but the soil is rich and ought to yield well. The evening was spent in

reaching the tops of some of the highest mountain hills, where the view of the adjacent country well rewarded us for our trouble; a few scattering hemlocks were seen in the ravine where we made our encampment, and the distant hills and ravines beyond were interspersed with several groves of cedar and pine. Our encampment lay in a fork formed by Burntwood creek and a little brook which falls into it . . .³ [Pl. 3.]

The party was now moving in several groups, and it is evident that Gibbs was not always with Major Cross; this explains the difference in the dates that often appear on the sketches made by Gibbs from those of the entries in the journal.

On September 22, Gibbs made a sketch of the Columbia from the mouth of Deschutes River. From this point the wagon train, with which Gibbs must have been traveling, moved southward up the right bank of the Deschutes River. During the morning of October 2, the train ascended the steep cliff near the river. A sketch made at that time reveals the wagons, each drawn by eight mules, forming a long line extending from the camp at the foot of the cliffs to the summit. It is an interesting drawing of a subject seldom recorded (pl. 4).

Leaving the Deschutes River, the expedition passed through the Cascade Range, and, on October 5, Gibbs made several sketches of the forest scenery, to which he attached the legends: "Burnt forest in Cascade Mts.," and "Cascade Mts. Cedar & firs," and again on October 9, "Forests of the Cascade Mts. Cedar & fir."

The expedition had now arrived at its destination. Gibbs continued on to Astoria where he became Deputy-collector of Customs, soon to become attached to the Indian Commission.

ON THE COLUMBIA RIVER, AUTUMN OF 1850

Two drawings of exceptional interest, made by Gibbs on the banks of the Columbia during the month of October 1850, are reproduced in plates 5 and 6.

The first of these shows the "Prow of dead Canoe on Bank of Columbia river, at mouth of Chamus Creek," and is a beautiful example of Gibbs' work. Chamus Creek is believed to have been the stream now known as La Camas Creek, which flows into the Columbia River near the southeast corner of Clarke County, Washington, about 15 miles above Vancouver. This was within the Chinookan country. Whether this canoe was placed on a scaffold or rested on

³ Burnt River flows eastward and joins Snake River in the southern part of Baker County, Oregon.

the ground is not known, but as so little has been recorded concerning the burial customs of the people of the region this sketch is of special interest.

A brief reference to the strange form of burial was made by Lieutenant Broughton, of the Vancouver Expedition,⁴ who explored the lower Columbia during the autumn of 1792. He was near Cape Disappointment, on the Washington side of the mouth of the Columbia, and wrote (vol. 2, p. 54): "At this place was found the remains of a deserted Indian village, and near it three large canoes supported from the ground, each containing dead human bodies. These canoe coffins were decorated at the head and stern with rude carved work, and from their decayed state seemed to have been thus appropriated for a great length of time."

Soon the Lewis and Clark party reached the valley of the Columbia. They encountered the same peculiar burials and left a more detailed account of the manner in which the canoes were placed, and of the various objects deposited in them.⁵ They stated (p. 429):

The Chinooks, Clatsops, and most of the adjoining nations, dispose of the dead in canoes. For this purpose a scaffold is erected, by fixing perpendicularly in the ground four long pieces of split timber. These are placed two by two, just wide enough apart to admit the canoe, and sufficiently long to support its two extremities. The boards are connected by a bar of wood run through them at the height of six feet, on which is placed a small canoe, containing the body of the deceased, carefully wrapped in a robe of dressed skins, with a paddle, and some articles belonging to the deceased, by his side. Over this canoe is placed one of a larger size, reversed, with its gunwale resting on the crossbars, so as to cover the body completely. One or more large mats of rushes or flags are then rolled round the canoes, and the whole secured by cords usually made of the bark of the white cedar. On these crossbars are hung different articles of clothing, or culinary utensils. The method practised by the Killamucks differs somewhat from this; the body being deposited in an oblong box, of plank, which, with the paddle, and other articles, is placed in a canoe, resting on the ground.

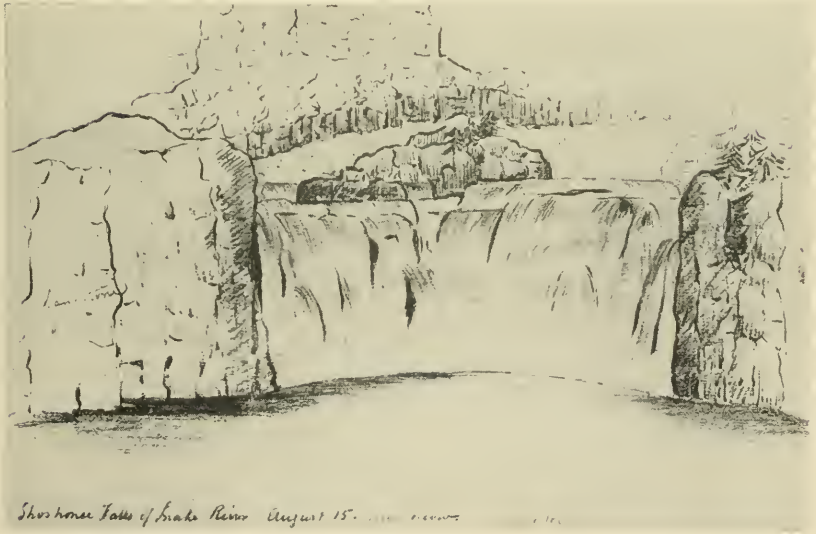
Later accounts of the curious form of burial are to be found, but the earlier descriptions are usually the more interesting. However, as remarked in the Lewis and Clark journal (p. 429), "Those who first visit the ground, can only be expected to furnish sketches rude and imperfect."

⁴ Vancouver, Captain George, *Voyage of Discovery* . . . 3 vols. London, 1798.

⁵ Lewis and Clark, *Travels to the source of the Missouri river and across the American continent to the Pacific ocean* . . . in the years 1804, 1805, and 1806. London, 1814.



1. The cañon below the Falls.



2. The Falls.

SHOSHONEE FALLS OF SNAKE RIVER, AUGUST 15, 1849

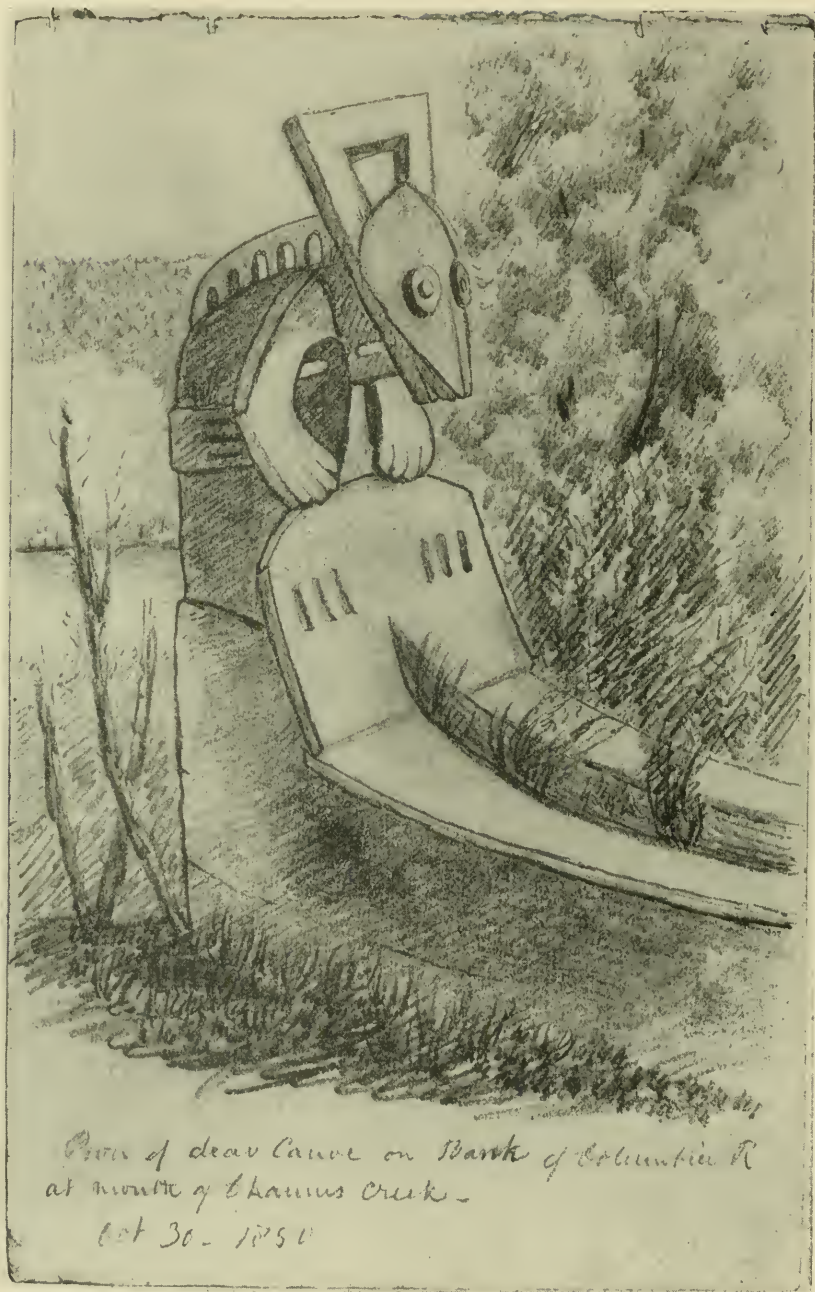


Ravine in the Mts of Burnt
River of Pacific Camp of Septs 4-5,
1849.

RAVINE IN MOUNTAINS OF BURNT RIVER, BAKER COUNTY, OREGON,
SEPTEMBER 4, 1849



ON THE TRAIL IN OREGON: ASCENDING HILL FROM DESCHUTES RIVER, OCTOBER 2, 1849



View of dead Canoe on Bank of Columbia R
at mouth of Camas Creek -

Oct 30 - 1850

BURIAL CANOE ON BANK OF THE COLUMBIA RIVER AT MOUTH OF
LA CAMAS CREEK. OCTOBER 30, 1850



CANOE ON THE COLUMBIA RIVER NEAR OAK POINT. OCTOBER 1850



1. Slacum, Chief of tribe at the falls of the Willamette, probably the Clowewalla. May 1851.



2. Joe or Alquema, Chief of the Santiam band of the Calapooya.

As previously mentioned, it is not known whether the canoe, the prow of which was sketched by Gibbs, was placed on a scaffold when in use or had always rested on the ground as shown in the drawing. The drawing suggests that the prow was rather massive and heavy, but there is no way to judge its size.

The Chinookan tribes who occupied both banks of the lower Columbia excelled in carving wood and bone. On January 20, 1806, when near the mouth of the Columbia on the south side, the Lewis and Clark party were among the Clatsops with whom they maintained a friendly intercourse. The narrative of the expedition refers to the skill of the natives in making many articles used in and about their houses, described as "large wooden buildings, varying in length from twenty to sixty feet, and from fourteen to twenty in width." The narrative continues (p. 432):

They are . . . very dexterous in making a variety of domestic utensils, among which are bowls, spoons, skewers, spits, and baskets. The bowl or trough is of different shapes, sometimes round, semicircular, in the form of a canoe, or cubic, and generally dug out of a single piece of wood, the larger vessels having holes in the sides by way of handles, and all executed with great neatness. In these vessels they boil their food, by throwing hot stones into the water, and extract oil from different animals in the same way. Spoons are not very abundant, nor is there any thing remarkable in their shape, except that they are large and the bowl broad . . . The usual plate is a small mat of rushes or flags, on which every thing is served.

Later, when the expedition was at the Cathlamah village, also on the Columbia and not far from the Clatsops, certain customs of the people were recorded in the narrative (p. 493):

This village we have already described, as situated opposite to the seal islands: on one of these the Indians have placed their dead in canoes, raised on scaffolds, above the reach of the tide. These people seem more fond of carving in wood than their neighbours, and have various specimens of their taste about the houses. The broad pieces supporting the roof and the board through which doors are cut, are the objects on which they chiefly display their ingenuity, and are ornamented with curious figures, sometimes representing persons in a sitting posture supporting a burden.

Beautiful examples of the work of the people near the mouth of the Columbia are shown in figure 1. Three of the carvings are in wood and one in bone. The latter, a knife handle, has on the end a remarkable representation of a raccoon, *Procyon lotor*, with the eyes indicated by copper inlays. The club is made of cedar and is rather light for the purpose indicated. All were collected by George Gibbs probably in 1850 or 1851. Another bowl obtained by him in the vicinity of Shoalwater Bay, on the coast a short distance north of

the mouth of the Columbia, is reproduced in figure 2. Similar pieces were undoubtedly seen by Lewis and Clark a generation earlier.

The second sketch made during the autumn of 1850, plate 6, bears the legend "Columbia River near Oak Point, Oct. 1850." The point is on the right bank of the Columbia about midway between the mouth and Vancouver, and was so named by Lieutenant Broughton in 1792.⁶ When going up the river they arrived at a spot "where, for the first



FIG. 1.—Specimens collected by George Gibbs on the lower Columbia.

a, bone knife handle, length $8\frac{1}{2}$ inches, U.S.N.M. no. 708; *b*, club for killing fish, wood, length 18 inches, U.S.N.M. no. 651; *c*, spoon, wood, length of figure on handle $3\frac{1}{8}$ inches, no number; *d*, bowl, wood, diameters 6 and 8 inches, U.S.N.M. no. 691.

time in this river, some oak-trees were seen, one of which measured thirteen feet in girth; this obtained the name of Oak Point."

The canoe is the most interesting feature of the sketch. To quote again from Lewis and Clark ⁷ (pp. 433-434):

The industry of the Indians is not confined to household utensils: the great proof of their skill is the construction of their canoes. In a country, indeed, where so

⁶ Vancouver, *op. cit.* vol. 2, p. 61.

⁷ *Op. cit.*

much of the intercourse between different tribes is carried on by water, the ingenuity of the people would naturally direct itself to the improvement of canoes, which would gradually become, from a mere safe conveyance, an elegant ornament. We have accordingly seen, on the Columbia, canoes of many forms, beginning with the simple boats near the mountains, to those more highly decorated, because more useful nearer the mouth of the Columbia. Below the grand cataract there are four forms of canoes: the first and smallest is about fifteen feet long, and calculated for one or two persons: it is, indeed, by no means remarkable in its structure, and is chiefly employed by the Cathlamahs and Wahkiacums among the marshy islands. The second is from twenty to thirty-five feet long, about two and a half or three feet in the beam, and two feet in the hold. It is chiefly remarkable in having the bowsprit, which rises to some height above the bow, formed by tapering gradually from the sides into a sharp point. Canoes of this shape are common to all the nations below the grand rapids.

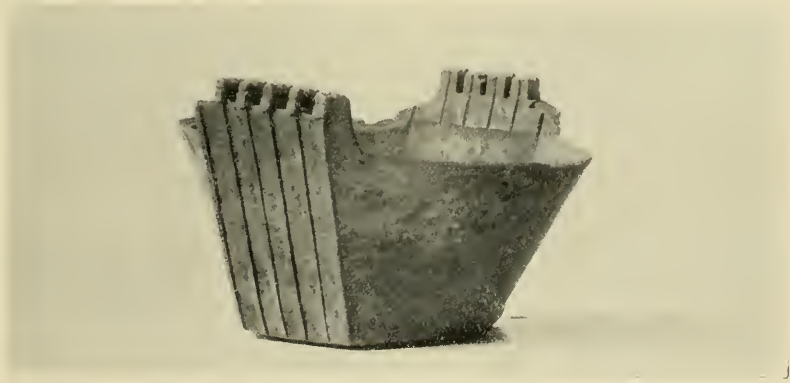


FIG. 2.—Wooden bowl collected by George Gibbs at Shoalwater Bay. Diameters $8\frac{1}{2}$ and $10\frac{1}{2}$ inches, U.S.N.M. no. 692.

The other types of canoes, larger than those just described, need not be mentioned. Evidently the canoe sketched by Gibbs belonged to the second group mentioned by Lewis and Clark, those which were “common to all the nations below the grand rapids.” There is no allusion in the early narratives to the use of sails and masts in the native craft. The mast and sail shown in the sketch had been adopted after contact with Europeans.

OREGON, 1851

A letter from the Acting Commissioner of Indian Affairs, dated October 25, 1850, addressed to J. P. Gaines, A. H. Skinner, and Beverly S. Allen, stated^s (p. 114):

^s *In Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs . . . 1850. Washington, 1850.*

"Gentlemen: I have been officially notified of your appointment as 'Commissioners to negotiate treaties with the several Indian tribes in the Territory of Oregon, for the extinguishment of their claims to lands lying west of the Cascade Mountains, under the act of 5th June last'; and am directed by the Hon. Secretary of the Interior to prepare appropriate instructions for your observance in the discharge of the duties of your office." The region was briefly described, the tribes were mentioned in a vague manner, and the letter then continued: "It will probably be best for you to treat first with the Indians in the white settlements, particularly in the Willamette Valley—and to treat separately with each tribe . . ."

Evidently the three commissioners were active during the ensuing months. In a joint communication to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, dated Champoly, April 19, 1851,⁹ they transmitted (p. 205): "a treaty concluded, on the 16th instant, with the Santiam band of the Callapooya tribe of Indians, by which they cede to the United States a portion of the Willamette valley, about eighty miles in length and about twenty in width. And also a treaty, concluded this day, with the Twallalty band of the same tribe, including a country about fifty miles in length and about thirty in width . . . Their numbers are, of the Santiam band, 155, and of the Twallaltys, 65."

Gibbs was associated with the Commissioners when the treaties were made.

Among the Gibbs material in the Bureau of American Ethnology, Smithsonian Institution, is a manuscript designating where and when he prepared many of the vocabularies. One record is of interest at this time as it refers to events at Champoeg in April 1851:¹⁰

Kalapuya.—My own vocabulary of this language was obtained April 4, 1851, while the Commission was engaged in a treaty with them at Champoeg. It is of the Si-yam-il, or as generally called Yamhill band, living on the river of that name, which empties into the Willamet from the coast range. The Twallatys (Twalati), and the Luckamukes (Luk-a-mai-yuk) speak the same dialect. The Santiam band, on the east side of the Wilamet, a rather different one. It was given by Thomas and Antoine, Chiefs.

Molele.—Obtained at the same place. This was received from an Indian of the band inhabiting the upper waters of the Santiam.

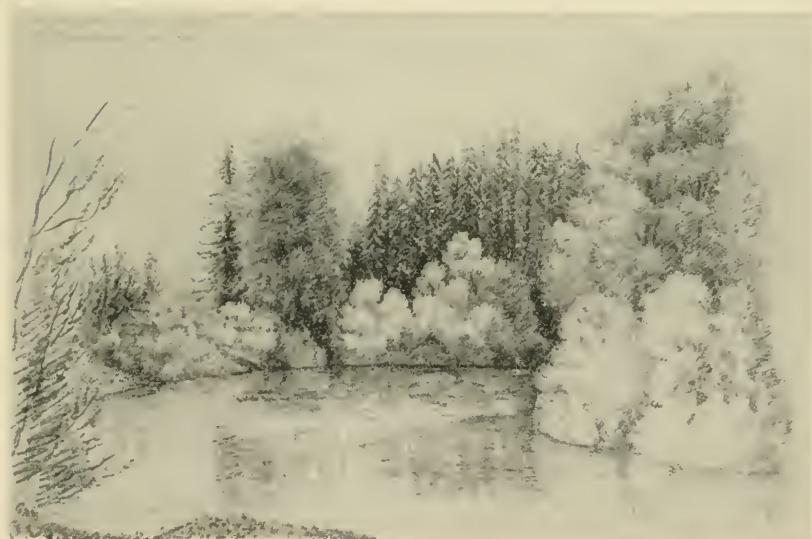
Many drawings were made at this time, four of which are now reproduced. Others show different parts of the valley as it appeared during the spring of 1851.

⁹ In Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs . . . 1851. Washington, 1851.

¹⁰ Bur. Amer. Ethmol. Manuscript Catalog No. 742.

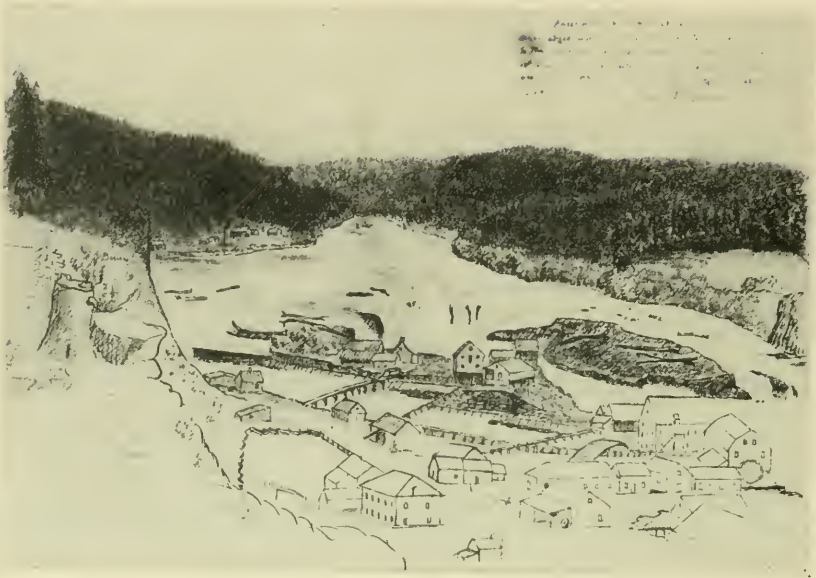


1. Champoeg and French Prairie, April 1851.



2. The Willamette River at Champoeg, May 1851.

VALLEY OF THE WILLAMETTE



1. Oregon City and the Falls of the Willamette.



2. Indians taking salmon at the Falls of the Willamette, June 1851.
AT OREGON CITY. 1851

General view of Hudson's Bay Company's Post
at Fort Vancouver, Oregon, with the "Kanaka
Village" July 1851.

920.1.



HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY'S POST AT FORT VANCOUVER, JULY 1851



*Hudson Bay Co's Post, Vancouver
July 2^d 1851.*

1. Fort Vancouver, July 2, 1851.



*Catholic Chapel - at Ft Vancouver
July 1st 1851.*

2. Catholic Chapel at Fort Vancouver, July 1, 1851.



*Officers quarters, Columbia Barracks
July 2^d 1851.*

3. Officers' quarters, Columbia Barracks, July 2, 1851.

AT THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY'S POST

Portrait sketches of two chiefs are given in plate 7, one being that of a chief of the Santiam band of the Callapooyas, but not one who had contributed to the vocabulary. This is well drawn, and the sloping forehead reveals the effect of artificial flattening. It was probably a good likeness.

The second portrait is that of "Slacum, Chief of tribe at Falls of Willamette (Upper Chinooks)," and was drawn a few days after the treaty was made with the Callapooya. Slacum may have been a chief of the Clowwewalla, belonging to the Chinookan family, a tribe that occupied the region bordering the falls of the Willamette River, the site of Oregon City. The name Slacum was probably derived from that of an American naval officer who visited the region in 1836 "to obtain information in relation to the settlements on the Oregon river."¹¹ He prepared an interesting, although brief, account of the native tribes then living on the Willamette, part of which follows. When ascending the river:

The first tribe of Indians are the Kallamooks, on the left bank, on a small stream of the same name, 30 miles from its mouth: 2d are Keowewallahs, alias *Tunnezvatas* or Willhametts. This tribe, now nearly extinct, was formerly very numerous, and live at the falls of the river, 32 miles from its mouth, on the right bank. They claim the right of fishing at the falls, and exact a tribute from other tribes who come hither in the salmon season (from May till October). Principal chiefs deceased. This river at the present day takes its name from this tribe. 3d. "Kallapooyahs" occupy lodges on both sides of the river. 4th. "Fallatrah" on a small stream of same name, right or west bank. 5th. Champoicho—west bank. 6th. Yamstills—west bank. 7th. Leelahs—both sides. 8th. Hanchoicks. All these 5 tribes speak Kallapooyah dialects, and are doubtless of that tribe, but at present are divided as designated, and governed by chiefs as named. All these tribes do not exceed 1,200.

The Willamette was a beautiful stream, as Slacum wrote, "even in midwinter, you find both sides clothed in evergreen, presenting a more beautiful prospect than the Ohio in June . . . On the right the land rises gradually from the water's edge, covered with firs, cedar, laurel, and pine. The oak and ash is at this season covered with long moss, of a pale sage green, contrasting finely with the deeper tints of the evergreens."

Gibbs appreciated the beauty of the region and revealed it in two sketches reproduced in plate 8.

The first is a view of "Champoeg and the prairies beyond," looking over the Willamette; the second shows the banks of the stream with the variety of trees and shrubs, with spring foliage.

¹¹ Slacum, William A., Memorial of . . . praying compensation for his services . . . 25th Congress, 2d Session, Senate Doc. 24. Washington, 1838.

Champoeg was on the right bank of the Willamette, at the northern end of French Prairie, the origin of which name was explained by Bancroft,¹² who wrote (pp. 70-73):

As their terms of contract expired, the Hudson's Bay Company began to retire its servants, giving them choice lands not too far removed from its benign rule. This was the origin of the French Canadian settlements in the beautiful Valley Willamette . . . French Prairie, the tract where the servants of the fur company began their planting in the Willamette Valley, extended from the great westward bend of that river south to Lac La Biche about twenty-five miles . . . The landing at the crossing of the Willamette on the east side was known as Campement du Sable, being a sandy bluff and an encampment at the point of arrival or departure for French Prairie. Two miles above this point was Champoeg, the first settlement.

The falls of the Willamette, when surrounded by the primeval forest and in its natural condition, was a place of great beauty. And as it was here that many Indians from the scattered villages would come to get their supply of salmon, it was likewise a place of great importance to the native inhabitants of the valley. But about the year 1840 a settlement was begun at the falls, Oregon City, and soon all was changed, although the few remaining Indians continued to take salmon at the falls, as others had done through generations.

Two sketches by Gibbs, reproduced in plate 9, show the falls, and Oregon City as it appeared in June 1851. An Indian is portrayed spearing fish from a canoe, another is seen standing on a fishing stage, in the right center of the sketch, using a net at the foot of the falls. Fish are also shown leaping from the water. The upper drawing is a view of Oregon City with the falls just beyond.

Oregon City was visited by Major Cross on October 5, 1849, after the completion of the trip from Fort Leavenworth¹³ and was described in these words (pp. 227-228):

The city of Oregon is not a very prepossessing place in its appearance, for, like all new places in the western country, the stumps and half-burnt trees lie about in every direction. It is immediately at the Willamette Falls, hemmed in by the river in front, and a ledge of rocks immediately in rear and very close to the city.

Leaving Oregon City, Gibbs evidently continued down the Willamette and next visited Fort Vancouver, which had been erected during the years 1824-1825. Sketches of the fort, and one of Columbia Barracks a short distance away, are shown in plates 10, 11.

¹² Bancroft, Hubert Howe, *The works of . . .* vol. 29, *History of Oregon*, vol. 1. San Francisco, 1886.

¹³ *Op. cit.* In 31st Congr., 2d Sess., Senate Ex. Doc. No. 1, pt. 2, Washington, 1850.

A concise description of Fort Vancouver, printed in 1840,¹⁴ explains many of the details of the drawings. To quote (pp. 19-20) :

On the north side of the Columbia, and a quarter of a mile from it, stands *Fort Vancouver*, the principal establishment of the Hudson's Bay Company west of the Rocky Mountains. It consists of a number of wooden buildings within a stockade, serving as dwelling-houses, stores, magazines, and workshops; and near it are other small buildings inhabited by the laborers, together with a saw-mill and grist-mill. The whole number of residents at the place is about eight hundred, of whom a large proportion are Indians or half-breeds. Several hundred acres of land near the fort are under cultivation, producing wheat, barley, oats, pease, potatoes, &c., in abundance; and the stock of cattle is also considerable.

It was a place of great activity, surrounded by many tribes who spoke different languages and had strange manners and ways of life.

Maj. Osborne Cross mentioned Fort Vancouver in his journal:¹⁵

Fort Vancouver, which is the headquarters of the Hudson's Bay Company, is on the right bank of the river. It is situated on a beautiful plain, about five miles long, and probably is three quarters of a mile wide. The country gradually rises, and runs back for ten or fifteen miles, passing through several plains, some of which are cultivated. On one of these plains there is an excellent seminary, where the children from the fort and the neighborhood are educated.

Immediately in rear of the fort, and on the rising ground, the company of artillery under Brevet Major Hatheway have put up temporary quarters, and have made themselves very comfortable.

The latter became Columbia Barracks, and the temporary quarters were soon replaced by others of a more permanent nature. The Officers' Quarters at the barracks, as they appeared 2 years later, were sketched by Gibbs July 2, 1851 (pl. 11, fig. 3). At that time they formed an attractive group of buildings facing Fort Vancouver, with the Columbia beyond, while a short distance in the rear was the edge of the forest which extended off to the north.

Gibbs did not remain many days in the vicinity of the fort, but turned southward to California where he joined the McKee party and soon set out to explore the northwestern part of the State and to visit the many native tribes some of whom may never before have come in contact with the white man.

IN NORTHWESTERN CALIFORNIA, 1851

The journal of the expedition into northwestern California, prepared by Gibbs and later mentioned by McKee in his letter of March

¹⁴ Greenhow, Robert, *Memoir, historical and political, on the Northwest coast of North America* . . . 26th Congr., 1st Sess., Senate Doc. 174. Washington, 1840.

¹⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 228.

13, 1852, was published by Schoolcraft the following year.¹⁶ It is a valuable account of a journey through a part of the country never before carefully studied, and describes briefly the native inhabitants of the rough, mountainous region who occupied secluded valleys in the vicinity of the rivers, often difficult to discover.

Pencil sketches made by Gibbs of scenes along the route reveal much of interest and beauty encountered in the wilderness and are now reproduced for the first time. Statements in the journal which tend to describe or explain the drawings will be quoted, although much of equal value, but not referring to the sketches, must necessarily be omitted.

This will be followed by excerpts from McKee's account of the expedition.

JOURNAL OF THE EXPEDITION OF COLONEL REDICK M'KEE, UNITED STATES
INDIAN AGENT, THROUGH NORTH-WESTERN CALIFORNIA. PERFORMED
DURING THE SUMMER AND FALL OF 1851. BY GEORGE GIBBS.

Monday, Aug. 11.—Colonel M'Kee and party, escorted by Major Wessells, and a detachment of thirty-five mounted riflemen, left Sonoma this morning, and moved over to Santa Rosa, encamping a little beyond Carillo's ranch . . . The general route proposed to be followed by the expedition, was up Russian river to its sources, down Eel river to Humboldt bay, and thence over to the Klamath, ascending that to the neighborhood of Shasté Valley, should the season permit. [Pl. 12.]

Continuing northward, the party soon reached Clear Lake where they remained several days. Large groups of Indians assembled, and a treaty was entered into. "In personal appearance, many of the Clear Lake Indians are of a very degraded caste; their foreheads naturally being often as low as the compressed skulls of the Chinooks . . . A vocabulary of this language was obtained from the Indian who accompanied us, and who spoke Spanish sufficiently to be enabled to interpret with his people." On the next day, August 19, the proposed treaty was explained to the assembled Indians. A region of great natural beauty (p. 109):

Surrounded on every side by mountains, this valley is completely isolated from the adjoining country, there being no access except by difficult trails . . . The principal valley upon the lake is that upon which we encamped, lying on the western side, and extending from mount M'Kee towards the head. The extent of this may be stated at ten miles in length, by an average width of four. A more beautiful one can hardly be pictured. Covered with abundant

¹⁶ Schoolcraft, Henry R., Information respecting the history, condition and prospects of the Indian tribes of the United States, pt. 3, pp. 99-177. Philadelphia, 1853.



Don Salmeron's steps

San Francisco

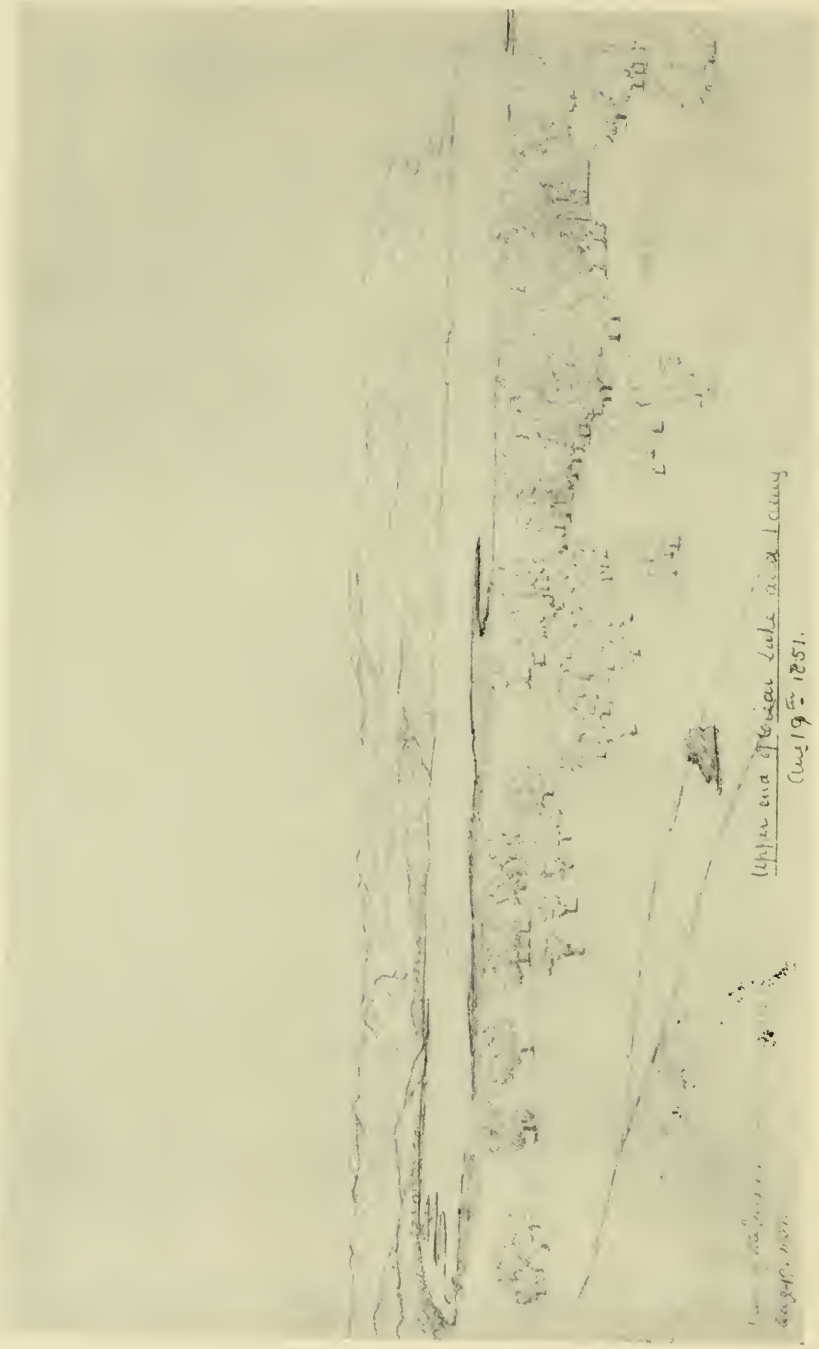
Admission Church Show

Plaza at Sonoma, Cal.

1851

G. C. A. J.

SONOMA, CALIFORNIA, AUGUST 11, 1851



UPPER END OF CLEAR LAKE AND VALLEY, AUGUST 19, 1851

grass, and interspersed with groves of superb oaks of the most varied and graceful forms, with the lake and its green margin of tulé in front, and the distance bounded everywhere by precipitous ranges, it combines features of surpassing grandeur and loveliness. Flowers of great variety and elegance abound, the woods are filled with game, and in the season innumerable flocks of water-fowl enliven the shores. [Pl. 13.]

Wednesday, Aug. 20.—The council was again assembled, and the treaty explained to them as engrossed . . . As regards the suitability of the reservation for its purpose, there can hardly be a doubt. The spot is isolated to a degree unusual even on the Pacific; abounds in all that is necessary for a large number of people in their savage state, and is capable of being made in the highest degree productive by cultivation.

Saturday, Aug. 30.—This valley, called by the Indians Ba-tem-da-kai, we supposed to be on the head of the south fork of Eel river, and so were informed by our guide and other mountaineers; but a belief exists, as we afterwards found . . . that it is, on the contrary, the head of the river before spoken of as entering the coast to the westward . . . A few Indians visited us, and were directed to call in the adjacent tribes.

The entire party remained in camp the following day.

Sunday, Aug. 31.—Quite a number of Indians were assembled and presents distributed, but no treaty attempted; for our Clear Lake interpreter, although able to comprehend them, could not explain freely in turn. Their language, however, is clearly of the same family as that of the tribes at the head of Russian river, and those last encountered. The total number in the vicinity, as near as could be ascertained, was about six hundred souls . . . They pluck their beards, and some of them tattoo. Many had their hair cut short, but others wore it turned up in a bunch in front, or occasionally on the back of the head . . . The average height of these men was not over five feet four or five inches . . . We saw no women . . .

I took the opportunity of to-day's halt, to ascend the hills on the eastern side of the valley. The view from this point was beautiful, the stream winding in serpentine form along the margin of the plain, fringed with oaks and firs, and the long slopes beyond diversified with forest and prairie. To the east rose heavy ranges of mountains, between which and the yet more distant Sacramento chain, a wide and deep gap indicated another valley, supposed to be the source of the main fork of Eel river.

The next day the trail led through a mountainous section, "crossing deep arroyas and then ascending a broken ridge between the waters of the south and middle forks [of Eel river]." Some Indians were encountered who "had robes of deer skin, dressed with the hair on, over their shoulders. They belonged to a wild mountain tribe, the terror of the valley Indians . . . Of their language and affinities, nothing is known."

September 5.—The trail crossed the river and passed a grove of redwoods. During the day a few Indians were encountered, and (p. 123):

two or three of them were of larger stature than usual, and one was really a fine-looking young fellow. They wore the deer-skin robe over the right

shoulder, and carried the common short bow, backed with sinew [*a*, fig. 3], and arrows pointed with stone, both tolerably well made. With all these Indians, the arrow-points are fastened into a short piece of wood, which in turn is fixed, though but loosely, into the shaft. The quiver, of dressed deer-skin, holds both bow and arrows. They had also, suspended round the neck, small nets, neatly made after the fashion of the common game-bag; the twine, which was very even, being of course their own work.

The last part of our march led us into a thick redwood forest.

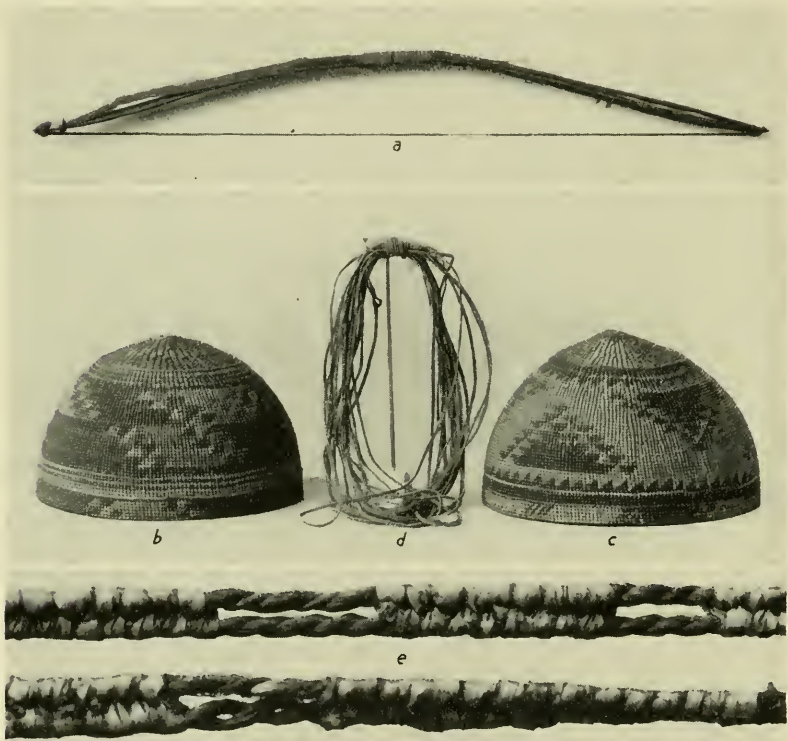


FIG. 3.—Specimens collected by George Gibbs on the Klamath River, California.

a, sinew-backed bow, length 34 inches, U.S.N.M. no. 649; *b*, basketry hat, diameter 7 inches, depth 4 inches, U.S.N.M. no. 7556; *c*, basketry hat, diameter $7\frac{3}{4}$ inches, depth 4 inches, U.S.N.M. no. 7558; *d*, headband, U.S.N.M. no. 7520; *e*, two sections of *d*, \times approximately 2.5.

Saturday, September 6.—Indians visited the camp but they were of little interest, and (p. 124) :

I endeavored in vain to get from them the names of articles at hand, parts of the body, &c., as they either could not or would not understand the object of the inquiry; nor was our Clear Lake Indian more successful after his method . . .



REDWOOD TREE. 52 FEET IN CIRCUMFERENCE. SEPTEMBER 6. 1851



1. Woman and child, at junction of Klamath and Trinity Rivers, October 6, 1851.



2. Young married woman, at junction of Klamath and Trinity Rivers, October 6, 1851.



3. Young girl, Salmon River, November 12, 1851.

SKETCHES IN THE VALLEY OF THE KLAMATH

Our camp was a very pretty one, the little prairie being level and rich, and encircled by a magnificent redwood forest. One tree near the tents I measured, and found it to be fifty-two feet in circumference, at four or five feet from the ground, and this although the bark and a portion of the wood were burned away . . . [Pl. 14.]

From September 29 until the morning of October 9, the party occupied a camp established at the junction of the Klamath and Trinity Rivers. Gibbs did not make a separate entry for each day spent at the camp, but between the days mentioned devoted much time to the study of the Indians with whom he was in contact. Many tribes were represented at the gathering, possessing similar manners and ways of life. To quote briefly (p. 139) :

With regard to their form of government, at least that of the Klamath and Trinity tribes, the *mow-ce-ma*, or head of each family, is master of his own house, and there is a *sci-as-lau*, or chief, in every village . . . The lodges of these Indians are generally very well built; being made of boards riven from redwood or fir, and of considerable size, often reaching twenty feet square. The roofs are pitched over a ridge-pole, and sloping each way; the ground being usually excavated to the depth of three or four feet, and a pavement of smooth stones laid in front. The cellars of the better class are also floored and walled with stone. The door always consists of a round hole in a heavy plank, just sufficient to admit the body; and is formed with a view to exclude the bears, who in winter make occasional and very unwelcome visits.

The people were described as being superior to any previously met, and with countenances denoting greater force and energy of character, as well as intelligence . . . The superiority, however, was especially manifested in the women, many of whom were exceedingly pretty; having large almond-shaped eyes, sometimes of a hazel color . . . their only dress the fringed petticoat, or at most, a deer-skin robe thrown back over the shoulders, in addition. The petticoat with the wealthier, or perhaps more industrious, was an affair on which great taste and labor were expended. It was of dressed deer-skin; the upper edge turned over and embroidered with colored grasses, the lower cut into a deep fringe, reaching nearly to the knee, and ornamented with bits of sea-shell, beads, and buttons . . . The same round basket-cap noticed before, is worn by the Klamath women [*b, c*, fig. 3], figures of different colors and patterns being worked into it. They tattoo the underlip and chin in the manner remarked at Eel river; the young girls in faint lines, which are deepened and widened as they become older, and in the married women are extended up above the corners of the mouth . . . The children are carried in baskets suspended from the head, after the manner shown in the sketch.

The original sketch to which this refers is reproduced in plate 15, figure 1. A picture of a "Young married Woman," also made at the forks of the Klamath and Trinity Rivers, October 6, 1851, is reproduced in plate 15, figure 2.

Continuing (p. 141):

The dress of the men consists, generally, of a pair of deer-skins with the hair on, stitched together. Sometimes, however, a noted hunter wears a couple of cougar skins, the long tails trailing behind him; and other again, on state occasions, display a breech-clout of several small skins, sewed into a belt or waistband . . . They are not as skilful in the preparation of dressed skins as the Oregon Indians, and the use of those dressed on both sides is mostly confined to the women.



FIG. 4.—Specimens collected by George Gibbs on the Klamath River, California.

a, food bowl of twined basketry, diameter $10\frac{1}{2}$ inches, depth $2\frac{3}{4}$ inches, U.S.N.M. no. 7568; *b*, food bowl of twined basketry, diameter $11\frac{1}{2}$ inches, depth 3 inches, U.S.N.M. no. 7563; *c*, cooking basket, diameter $9\frac{1}{4}$ inches, depth 4 inches, U.S.N.M. no. 7567; *d*, cooking basket, diameter $9\frac{1}{4}$ inches, depth $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches, U.S.N.M. no. 7553.

On the morning of October 9 the expedition left the mouth of the Trinity and continued up the valley of the Klamath. About 2 miles above the forks they arrived at—

the Hai-am-nu village, and visiting one of the lodges, found the inhabitants engaged in cooking and eating. The meal consisted of fish and acorn porridge, made by mixing the flour in a basket [*c*, *d*, fig. 4], in which the water is kept

boiling by means of hot stones. Of the acorn flour they likewise make a sort of bread, which they bake in the ashes. They had several spoons, very neatly made of bone or horn [*a, b, fig. 5*]. At this village there was a large fish-dam; a work exhibiting an extraordinary degree both of enterprise and skill . . . We camped opposite the high point which forms a land-mark from the Bald Hills, and which gives the name Bluff creek to a stream entering from the northwest, called by the Indians Otche-poh. Upon the other side of the river was an Indian village, the Sche-perrh: the first belonging to the

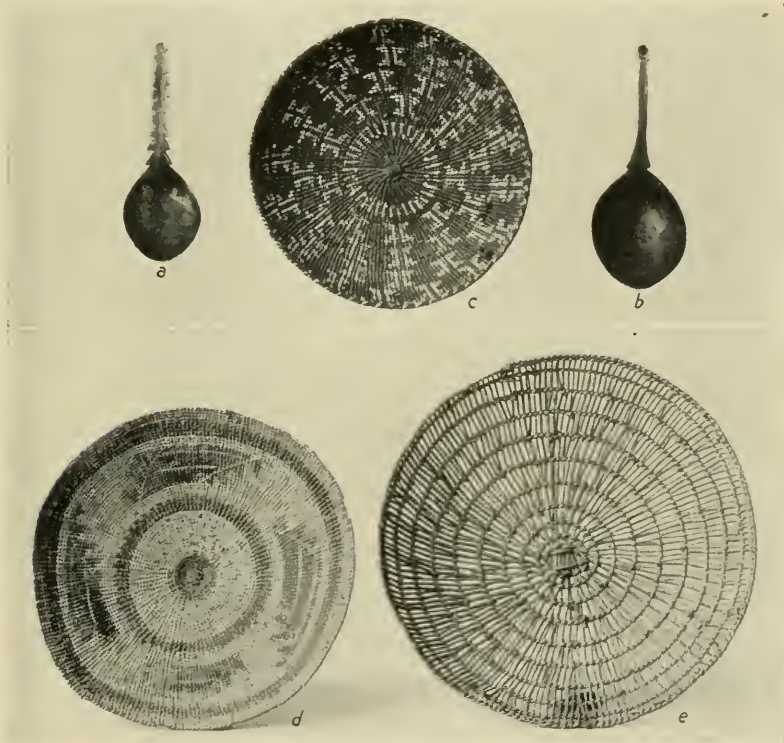


FIG. 5.—Specimens collected by George Gibbs on the Klamath River, California.

a, spoon made of elk antler, length $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches, U.S.N.M. no. 7510; *b*, spoon made of elk antler, length 6 inches, U.S.N.M. no. 7511; *c*, shallow food tray, diameter 7 inches, depth 2 inches, U.S.N.M. no. 7561; *d*, shallow food tray, diameter $10\frac{3}{4}$ inches, depth $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches, U.S.N.M. no. 7562; *e*, tray for draining liquid from food, diameter 12 inches, depth $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches, U.S.N.M. no. 7562.

tribe occupying the middle section of the river, and of which the Quoratem or Salmon river Indians may be considered as the type. [Pl. 16, fig. 1.]

The party encamped on the bank of the Klamath about 1 mile above the mouth of Salmon River and there remained from the afternoon of October 11 until the morning of the 13th. This was a rugged, mountainous region through which it was difficult to pass.

P. 150.—Salmon river, or as it is called by the Indians, the "Quoratem," is the largest of the affluents of the Klamath, with the exception of the Trinity . . . Upon the Klamath, both above and below the junction, are Indian villages of some size, prettily situated on high platforms of rock projecting over the water, and shaded by groves of oaks and bay trees; while below, the river, compressed in its channel, rushes boiling over rapids. The accompanying sketches were taken, one from near our camp, representing the Tish-ráwa village, and the Klamath, below the entrance of the Salmon [pl. 1]; the other from a mile higher up, showing the course of the Klamath through the mountains above the forks [pl. 16, fig. 2]. The tree on the right hand of the latter represents one of the signal or "telegraph" trees of the Klamath Indians. These, which are among the most conspicuous features of the scenery upon the river, occur near every village. They are always selected upon the edge of some hill, visible to a considerable distance in either direction. Two trees, one trimmed in the form of a cross, the other with merely a tuft on the top, represent each lodge; and in time of danger or of death, a fire kindled beneath them, informs the neighboring tribes of the necessity or misfortune of its occupants.

Scott's Valley, with "the snowy peak of Shasté lying to the south-east, towering above all," was reached on the afternoon of October 21. During the following days Gibbs, with other members of the party, made trips to the surrounding country to examine the valley and to contact the native tribes. On Sunday, October 26, he rode to Shasté Butte City, some 25 miles from the camp, and the next morning (p. 165):

rode to the top of a range of hills about four miles distant, for the purpose of obtaining a view of the country. The prospect here was very extensive, commanding the northern and eastern portions of the plain, and extending south-easterly, to Mount Shaste, which was distant about thirty miles . . . From the same point of view we could see Mount Pitt, or more properly Pitt mountain, so called from the traps formerly dug near it, by the Indians; and the noted land-marks of the Oregon trail, the "Pilot Knob," on the Siskire range to the north, and the "Black or Little Butte," to the south. [Pl. 17.]

Members of the party, including Gibbs, started from Scott's valley camp about noon on November 6 to return to San Francisco. They passed over the same trail to their old camp on the Klamath, near the mouth of the Salmon, where they arrived on the 12th. There (p. 174):

several of our old acquaintances among the Indians visited us; and I succeeded in persuading a pretty girl, the chief's daughter, to sit for her portrait. The likeness was sufficiently good to be recognised, though it certainly did not flatter the very gentle and pleasing expression of her face . . . [pl. 15, fig. 3]. We found the Indians of the village which had been burnt down, rebuilding their houses for the winter. The style was very substantial, the huge poles requiring five or six men to lift. These lodges, it may be mentioned, are usually dismantled in summer, when the inhabitants live in temporary bush huts.



1. The Klamath above the fish dam, October 9, 1851.



2. The Klamath. Signal tree of the Indians on right. October 13, 1851.

VIEWS IN THE VALLEY OF THE KLAMATH



The Shasté Butte
From the base north-west of Shasté Butte Valley

50. 111

THE SHASTÉ BUTTE AND VALLEY. OCTOBER 27, 1851

After encountering many difficulties and delays, Gibbs arrived at San Francisco December 28, 1851, "having been absent on the Expedition nearly five months."

The specimens collected by Gibbs on the Klamath River in California, which are now in the United States National Museum and many of which are shown in figures 3, 4, and 5, are believed to have been obtained by him during the autumn of 1851. Several of the pieces represent forms of objects mentioned specifically in his journal as being used by the Indians who were met during the journey up the valley of the Klamath, and these may have been collected at that time. All are excellent examples and were evidently chosen with care.

The bow, made of yew, is strengthened on the back by sinew which, although originally glued to the wood, has become detached. The cord, as shown in the photograph, is 34 inches in length.

The headband, *d*, figure 3, is described in the old list of specimens as "a ribbon for the hair," and is an unusual piece to have been preserved. If extended it would be about 20 feet in length, but it is arranged in 15 coils, held together at one place by an end being passed around the coils several times and fastened. The average width is $\frac{1}{8}$ inch, the average thickness about $\frac{1}{16}$ inch. As shown in the enlarged photograph, *e*, figure 3, it is formed of two twisted cords of vegetal fiber, each cord being made of two strands which are loosely twisted. The two cords of fiber are held together, parallel, by a light-colored grass, braided so as to allow the cords to remain separated. At irregular intervals the braided grass is omitted, thus allowing the two twisted cords to be exposed. There is a small loop at one end of the cords.

All baskets, basket hats, and trays are beautiful pieces and may be the oldest existing examples from that part of California.

The shallow tray, no. 7561, *d*, figure 5, is reenforced on the bottom by the attachment of pliable twigs or shoots, probably of the willow, which are bent to form circular bands, each band or ring being composed of two coils. Two such bands were used, one rather small and the other near the outer edge.

The two small spoons, *a*, *b*, figure 5, are typical examples and show the effect of much use.

MINUTES KEPT BY JOHN MCKEE IN NORTHWESTERN CALIFORNIA, 1851

On October. 15, 1850, a letter was addressed to Redick McKee, Geo. W. Barbour, and O. M. Wozencraft, by the Acting Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington, which read in part¹⁷ (p. 121) :

Gentlemen: I have the honor to enclose herewith a copy of a letter from the Secretary of the Interior, by which you will find that your functions and salaries as Indian agents are suspended; and that you are appointed, with the sanction of the President, commissioners "to hold treaties with various Indian tribes in the State of California," as provided in the Act of Congress, approved Sept. 30, 1850. Your commissions are also enclosed.

The three newly appointed commissioners met and entered into treaties with various tribes. They had worked together, but on May 15, 1851, wrote from Camp Barlow, San Joaquin River, to the Commissioner¹⁸ (p. 224) :

We have now concluded, in view of the almost interminable extent of country to be traversed in carrying out our instructions, to cease as a board, and address ourselves to the work individually. We have made a temporary division of the State into three districts, for the purpose of negotiating treaties with the various tribes, upon the general plan submitted in our joint letter of 10th March. For our respective districts, lots were drawn to-day, and the northern fell to the writer (R. McKee,) the middle to O. M. Wozencraft, and the southern to George W. Barbour.

With the coming of immigrants, prospectors, and settlers, unrest and uncertainty developed among the Indians of northern California, and a general uprising was feared. As a result of the existing conditions it was deemed necessary for a commission to visit the various tribes in the endeavor to create friendship, to enter into treaties, and to set apart reservations where all could live in peace and security. Many of the scattered tribes, or groups, occupied secluded valleys, reached by narrow trails over mountains or through rocky ravines and often difficult to discover; nevertheless, the venture proved of much importance.

Redick McKee led the Expedition, and on July 29, 1851, wrote from San Francisco to Luke Lea, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington, saying in part¹⁹ (p. 128) :

¹⁷ *In* Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs . . . 1850. Washington, 1850.

¹⁸ *In* Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs . . . 1851. Washington, 1851.

¹⁹ The journal or *Minutes kept by John McKee, secretary, on the expedition from Sonoma, through northern California*, and many letters pertaining to the

At present I can form no satisfactory estimate of the amount of appropriations our treaties will require . . . The largest estimate will fall below the cost of a *California Indian war*, if one should unhappily become general . . . I am anxious to get off, so as, if possible, to make the journey before the rainy season sets in. I propose taking the Clear Lake Indians on my route, who are said to number three or four thousand, and will endeavor to make pacific arrangements with them before passing over the coast range. On the Klamath and Trinity rivers, from all the accounts I have received, I shall find large bodies of the largest, wildest, most intelligent, and warlike Indians in California.

The commission, accompanied by an escort of 36 dragoons under command of Maj. W. W. Wessells, United States Army, left Sonoma August 11, 1851. As stated in the journal (p. 134): "Agent McKee moved with his escort from Sonoma, at 8 o'clock a. m., and the command is now encamped 19 ⁷/₁₀ miles up the Sonoma valley, on the Russian river valley trail. Mr. George Gibbs has been employed as Chinook interpreter . . ." ²⁰

Two days later, August 13, the party left the Sonoma valley and followed a trail on the west side of Russian River, and that night encamped "five or six miles below the first cañon, or defile, through which the stream flows." The next day the commission was joined by Gen. J. M. Estelle and staff, of the 2d division of the California militia, who had been sent by the Governor to assist in effecting treaties with the Indians residing near Clear Lake and Russian River.

On the night of August 16 the entire party camped on the bank of Russian River, then moved on to (p. 136):

Camp Lupiyuma, near Clear lake, August 17, 1851.—R. McKee and party, composed of secretary, and Gibbs as interpreter, with a sufficient number of pack-mules to transport provisions and such presents as are designed for the Indians; also ten head of cattle, with a detachment of ten dragoons in charge of Major Wessells as an escort, all under the guidance of two Indian guides,

undertaking, were included in the Report of the Secretary of the Interior . . . March 17, 1853. Special Session, Senate Ex. Doc. No. 4. The following quotations, unless otherwise stated, are from that document.

²⁰ McKee sent a lengthy letter to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs dated "Camp at Big Bend of Eel River, September 12, 1851," in which he said (p. 181): "At Sonoma I was fortunate in securing the services of George Gibbs, formerly of New York, and recently attached to the Indian commission in Oregon. He is acquainted with the Tchinnook (Chinook) language, and the *jargon* spoken by all the tribes on the borders of Oregon and California. He is, moreover, a practical topographical engineer; has kept a journal of our entire route, and will furnish me, I hope, in time for my final report, a correct map and reconaissance of the trail from Sonoma, showing the exact position of all the important rivers, lakes, mountains and valleys, together with a synopsis of the various dialects of the tribes we have met."

left the main camp at an early hour this morning, and commenced ascending the mountains dividing the Russian river and Clear Lake valleys, following a narrow, precipitous trail leading in many places through a dense forest, with oak and chemisall undergrowth . . . We are encamped upon the table-lands immediately adjoining the lake. Several Indians have visited camp this evening, and we expect to have several chiefs in council to-morrow.

On the morning of the 18th "according to agreement a number of the chiefs and braves of the Clear Lake Indians" met the commission in council. Much of interest and importance transpired during the succeeding hours. The Council again convened on Tuesday afternoon, August 19, when McKee explained to the Indians the nature of the proposed treaty, and stated that he would give them, in the name of the President, "all of the Clear Lake valley proper, upon condition they would all live in it peaceably, and agree that all other tribes the President may send among them to live should be received as brothers, &c." To this the Indians agreed.

The party returned to the main encampment on Russian River and soon continued northward. During August 25, they crossed the mountains between the Russian and Eel Rivers and that night camped in a valley near an old Indian village. The Indians were "entirely nude and very wild." Many Indians appeared at the camp the following morning, and the commissioner explained the nature of the treaties made with the Indians at Clear Lake and Russian River, after which there was a mutual understanding for peace.

The expedition continued through the mountains, but advanced slowly over unknown trails. They left camp early on August 29 but were soon forced to stop in a cañon, a place where sufficient water could be obtained for the animals. During the day 15 or 16 Indian men, all entirely naked, visited the camp. From them it was learned that many Indians were living in "a long valley on the headwaters of the middle fork of Eel river." The party had been unable to discover the valley, although they had spent several days in hunting for it. The Indians called the valley Ba-tim-da-kia.

During September 5 and 6, the expedition rested at Camp Redwood, on the South Fork of Eel River.

On September 10, the camp was at "Big Bend of Eel river," where the party remained several days. Gibbs had, as always, been active in obtaining information concerning the Indians, and as mentioned in the journal (p. 151): "Some words, relating to sensible objects, have been obtained by Mr. Gibbs. The names of tribes could not be ascertained, nor their numbers. But he has learned that all the Indians around Humboldt bay, and as far up Eel river as Van Dusen's fork, say fourteen miles, speak the same language. Above the forks a

different dialect is spoken, but so as to be understood by the different tribes." And at the same camp two days later "about a dozen naked Indians hanging around camp were supplied with food and some clothing."

The following morning, September 13, Gibbs, with two other members of the party, left camp to "proceed in a canoe down Eel river to its mouth." This was to enable him to explore the country south of the river, and to meet the Indian inhabitants of the region in the endeavor to have them visit the camp. Gibbs returned to the main camp on the evening of September 14, after having reached the mouth of the river, and stopping at 10 or 12 Indian rancherias on the banks of the stream where they distributed presents. That same evening "the express despatched to Port Trinidad returned . . . with despatches from the Indian department at Washington."

Camp of Humboldt City, September 15, 1851.—Finding it impossible to collect the Indians, or to hold proper communication with them, R. McKee moved camp with the escort this morning, and encamped at this place, after a march of twelve miles . . ." On the following day they crossed Eel River at low tide and moved a few miles to Bucksport. An entry in the journal that day states (p. 154): "The bands of Indians living upon Eel river have no permanent place of residence, but move from river to mountain and from mountain to river, as the season for fishing and gathering nuts and berries arrives; and among the different bands, though not at actual war, no friendly intercourse exists."

Soon they resumed their journey northward, encountering many Indians as well as white settlers, and so approached one of the most important centers. They arrived at (p. 156):

Bloody Camp, September 27, 1851, three miles from the junction of the Klamath rivers.—Reached this camp, upon the top of a mountain, after a very tedious march of twelve miles. Several Indians were seen upon the trail to-day, but fled to the woods when approached. Fine grass and water on this mountain. The agent has gone forward this morning to examine the pasture, &c., near the junction, with a view to the removal of our camp to a suitable place for a treaty ground, if one can be found. The country around the junction is a wild mountainous region, entirely unfit for cultivation, and indeed can scarcely be travelled by pack-mules. The Indians are said to be numerous, and subsist chiefly on the salmon and salmon trout, which the rivers afford in great abundance, and on the berries, nuts, &c., obtained on the mountain sides. Deer, elk, bear, &c., are quite plenty, but the Indians kill but few, as their only arm is the bow and arrow.

Two days later, September 29, McKee accompanied by part of his guard, established a camp at the junction of Klamath and Trinity

Rivers where they remained until October 9. Many Indians gathered near the camp (p. 157) :

The Indians here are a very fine-looking race, low in stature, with smooth, regular features. The men are nearly nude, and never seen without the bow and quiver of arrows, exhibiting considerable skill in their construction. The women wear petticoats of deer-skin, dressed and ornamented with tassels, beads, shells, &c. Some of them are very handsomely made. Strings of beads and shells are also worn about the neck, and ornaments of every description are highly prized.²¹

On October 6, a treaty was concluded with the many groups of Indians who had gathered for that purpose at the junction of the Klamath and Trinity Rivers, and that night (p. 162) : "Presents of blankets, shirts, pants, beads, shawls, handkerchiefs, &c., &c., were distributed by the light of large fires; after which the Indians all separated for the night, well pleased." Among the bands present that day was the "Wetch-peck band" of which Mec-ug-gra was chief. (Pl. 18.)

On October 9, the party moved from the vicinity of the junction of Klamath and Trinity Rivers, crossed the Klamath at Durkee's ferry, and established camp near Bluff Creek. During the day they traversed a rough mountain trail. A sketch made at that time shows a small Indian encampment in the bend of the river.

The Indians near Salmon River speak a different dialect from those below them.

Camp Cor-a-tem, near mouth of Salmon river, October 12, 1851.—R. McKee remained at this camp to meet the Indians of this neighborhood as agreed. At 10 o'clock about 150 men and women were assembled. Each band arranged

²¹Quantities of trade beads were distributed among the Indians of California. They were received from several sources, and the following letter will tell where some were obtained (p. 360) : Letter from P. B. Reading to Luke Lea, Indian Commissioner—

Washington, September 10, 1852.

"SIR: Please notice below a memorandum of articles which I would recommend to be purchased for presents to be distributed among the Indians in California. It will be well to make the purchases in New York, as it is quite uncertain if Mr. Beale, the superintendent, could find the articles in California:

Small white porcelain beads.....	\$4,500
Small black porcelain beads.....	2,000
Small red porcelain beads.....	3,000
Large glass beads, assorted.....	2,000
Turkey red prints.....	2,500
Gay-colored shawls	1,500

15,500

"It will be necessary that the packages be made up to the weight of about 200 lbs., and well secured in oilcloth coverings, in order to prevent damage to contents, as the present is the rainy season."



young Weit-spek Chief
Yimily Omen -

YOUNG CHIEF OF THE WEIT-SPEK TRIBE. PROBABLY MEC-UG-GRA
Drawn by Capt. Seth Eastman, from original sketch by George Gibbs,
October 1851.

separately, communicating with them through Mr. C. W. Durkee, and he through the Wetchpeck Indian from the junction of Klamath and Trinity . . .

The number of Indians living near this camp, around the mouth of Salmon river, is about 225 souls, all told. They compare favorably in size and appearance, and intelligence, with the Indians below; speak a different dialect, though they intermarry with them. Their houses are built of slabs split out from redwood timber, in which a family of ten or fifteen will reside, relying principally upon fish for a subsistence.

The following day, October 13, the party was in "Camp on Klamath river, 12 miles above mouth of Salmon river." The trail over which they passed that day was difficult and dangerous, and "several of our animals fell from the trail and rolled down the mountain, but were recovered and brought into camp." Gibbs made another sketch of the rugged mountain scenery.

"*Camp in Scott's valley, October 21, 1851* . . . Our route to-day led up the Klamath river to the north of Scott's river; thence up Scott's river to Scott's bar, where a large number of miners have been and are at work; thence crossing Scott's river, and over a high, steep mountain into this valley . . ." The party remained in the valley several days, during which time the surrounding country was examined. On the 24th "Messrs. Gibbs, Kelsey, and Woods have been sent out to explore and examine this valley, and adjacent hills and mountains, relative to its adaptation for an Indian reservation." Two days later, October 26, "Mr. George Gibbs was despatched to Shasta plains to examine that part of the country."

"*Camp in Scott's valley, October 27, 1851*.—This is the day appointed for the Indians in Shasta and Scott's valleys, and on Scott's river, to assemble at this camp . . . The citizens of Shasta Butte city assembled."²²

Remained in Scott's valley until November 6, when they "commenced the march for the coast by the same trail we came over from Durkee's ferry." Continued on through the mountains and on November 11 "crossed to the east side of the Klamath at an Indian rancheria, swimming our animals—no accidents."

"*November 12, 1851*.—Detained some time this morning getting our mules from the mountain, and crossing our goods over in canoes: swimming the mules over, they became alarmed, and two were drowned. This to us is a serious loss . . . Started at 10 o'clock, and reached our old camp 'Coratem,' near the mouth of Salmon river, at 4." And the next morning "Mr. Gibbs and myself took a canoe and three Indians this morning and descended the river, passing many

²² On July 30, 1852, McKee wrote to Luke Lea, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington, and referred to happenings "in the neighborhood of *Yraka* (late Shasta Butte city)." (P. 353.)

dangerous ripples or rapids, and at 4 o'clock reached Durkee's ferry, mouth of Trinity river."

The expedition was disbanded and Gibbs went to San Francisco.

Quotations from two letters written by Redick McKee, to Luke Lea, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington, will shed light on subsequent events (pp. 294-297):

San Francisco, March 1, 1852.

... Since I wrote I have received from Mr. George Gibbs his report, or journal, of the expedition to northern California, accompanied by a very beautiful map of the country traversed, and sundry vocabularies of the languages spoken by the tribes we visited. These I design sending to you by the mail which takes this; but our friend, General S. D. King, of the land survey department, is making a copy of the map, and the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs desires me to afford them a reading of Mr. Gibb's views as to the reservations made for the Indians, at a meeting appointed for the 4th instant . . .

P. S. Mr. Gibbs having forwarded some sketches to Mr. Schoolcraft by the last mail, I will, with this, send the vocabularies.

The second letter reads in part:

San Francisco, March 13, 1852.

SIR: My last despatch was dated 1st instant, and accompanied a sealed package of vocabularies, prepared by Mr. George Gibbs. I have deposited in the post office, to go with this letter, Mr. Gibb's map of my route through northern California, and his manuscript journal of the expedition. This journal, the map, and the sketches forwarded by last steamer to Mr. Schoolcraft, will, I hope, be *neatly and carefully published*. They will throw some additional light upon a part of this State, not previously explored. On this subject, I enclose letters from Mr. Gibbs to the honorable Senators Hamilton Fish and Truman Smith, and to H. R. Schoolcraft, esq., which you will please read, and then deliver.

It is now possible, after the lapse of many years, to present the sketches "neatly and carefully published," together with others which were made by Gibbs before he joined McKee on the journey into northwestern California.

During subsequent years, until his departure from the Pacific coast late in 1860, Gibbs' interest in the Indians continued. He made vocabularies among the native tribes scattered over a wide region, and gathered ethnographical material in California, Oregon, and Washington, on Puget Sound and far up the Columbia. As such material was at that time so plentiful, it is evident he selected choice specimens to be carried, or sent, to his home in New York. If all the material thus collected could be brought together, it would prove of special interest as representing the work of tribes then living in their primitive state, maintaining manners and customs that had been followed and practiced for generations, but which were soon to be lost or changed through contact with those who came to claim and occupy the country.