

Historical Overview  
of the  
Redwood Creek Basin and Bald Hills Regions  
of  
Redwood National Park,  
California

by  
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## Preface

The following report is a synopsis of the main historical themes of northern Humboldt County in general, and of the Redwood Creek basin and Bald Hills regions in particular. Pioneering and ranching activities in those areas recently included within the New Lands of Redwood National Park, California, were a result of broad expansionist movements encouraged by the initiation of trade and commerce with the interior mining regions at the head of the Sacramento Valley. Overcoming such obstacles as isolation and Indian hostility during the 1850s and 1860s, the ranchers of the Redwood Creek Valley and Bald Hills had, by the end of the century, laid the foundations of a thriving lifestyle based on agricultural, horticultural, and stock-raising activities. These pursuits lasted well into the twentieth century, when they were finally disrupted and almost entirely destroyed by the arrival of the lumber industry. The story of the redwood country and the hardships and triumphs endured and won by its conquerors is a fascinating chronicle of the indomitability of the pioneer spirit.

In such a brief report, only highlights of an area's history can be covered, but hopefully, in conjunction with earlier architectural and archeological evaluations, this study will provide the park interpretive staff with some indication of the valuable cultural resources to which they have access. Thanks are due to the Redwood National Park staff in Arcata, California, for their assistance on certain aspects of this report.

L.W.G.  
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## Table of Contents

Preface . . . . .	i
I. Exploration of Northern California . . . . .	1
A. Coastal Expeditions . . . . .	1
B. Land Expeditions . . . . .	2
II. Description of Land Areas in Humboldt County . . . . .	4
A. Coastal Lowlands Merge into the Redwood Forest . . . . .	4
B. The Redwood Forest and Redwood Creek Basin . . . . .	4
C. Bald Hills . . . . .	5
D. Valleys and Prairies . . . . .	5
III. Settlement of Humboldt County . . . . .	6
A. Influence of Mining Activity on the Trinity River . . . . .	6
B. Trinidad . . . . .	6
C. Humboldt City . . . . .	6
D. Union (Arcata) . . . . .	6
E. Eureka . . . . .	7
IV. Packing Trade in Humboldt County . . . . .	8
A. Spread of Mining in Northern California . . . . .	8
B. Humboldt Bay Becomes the Major Supply Point for the Mines . . . . .	8
C. Trinidad Initiates the Mining Trade . . . . .	8
D. Other Towns in the Region Establish Trade Links . . . . .	10
E. Statistics of the Packing Business . . . . .	11
F. Importance of the Packing Trade Wanes . . . . .	11
V. Extension of Settlement . . . . .	13
A. The Wilderness is Slowly Tamed . . . . .	13
B. Settlement Penetrates the Interior . . . . .	14
C. Crops and Livestock . . . . .	14
VI. The Indian Wars . . . . .	16
A. Disruption of the Native Population by White Encroachment . . . . .	16
B. The Federal Government Attempts a Peace- Making Role . . . . .	18
C. Unrest and Dissatisfaction Precede a Long Period of Strife . . . . .	19
D. An Aggressive Military Policy Stems the Tide of War . . . . .	23



VII.	Resumption of Agriculture and Stock Raising . . . . .	26
A.	Sheep Husbandry Increases in Importance . . . . .	26
B.	Cattle- and Hog-Raising Activities . . . . .	27
C.	Other Enterprises Expand . . . . .	27
D.	Small Villages Turn into New Towns . . . . .	27
E.	Ranching Spreads Throughout the Hill Country . . . . .	28
F.	A Summary of Farming Activity in Humboldt County . . . . .	28
VIII.	Early Settlers in the Bald Hills Region . . . . .	29
A.	First Ranches Established Along Redwood Creek . . . . .	29
B.	The Bald Hills are Populated . . . . .	29
C.	The Redwood Creek Basin Proves Conducive to Farming and Stock Raising . . . . .	30
D.	Towns 'Appear in the Bald Hills . . . . .	32
IX.	The Lyons Family . . . . .	34
A.	Jonathan Lyons Arrives in California . . . . .	34
B.	A Successful Sheep Operation is Plagued by Several Fires . . . . .	35
C.	The Lyons Family Extends its Holdings in the Bald Hills . . . . .	35
D.	Death Claims Prominent Humboldt County Pioneers . . . . .	36
X.	Roads and Trails . . . . .	37
A.	Wagon Roads Replace Old Trails . . . . .	37
B.	The Crescent City to Orleans Stage Route . . . . .	37
XI.	Lumber Industry . . . . .	39
A.	Development Around Humboldt Bay . . . . .	39
B.	Redwood Gains in Popularity . . . . .	39
C.	Lumbering Along Redwood Creek . . . . .	39
D.	Effects of Logging Operations on Ranching Activities in the Bald Hills . . . . .	40
XII.	Historical Resources of the Bald Hills . . . . .	41
A.	Importance of Early Pioneer History . . . . .	41
B.	Results of Site Surveys . . . . .	42
1.	Dolason Barn . . . . .	42
2.	Tomlinson Barn Ruins . . . . .	43
3.	Garret Barn, South Barn, "Ingomar Club" . . . . .	43
4.	Lane Property . . . . .	43



5. Well . . . . .	44
6. Shelter . . . . .	44
7. Jonathan Lyons Homestead . . . . .	44
8. Trinidad Trail . . . . .	45

Bibliography . . . . .	47
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- No. 1. "The Official Township Map of Humboldt Co.  
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## I. Exploration of Northern California

### A. Coastal Expeditions

Initial investigation of the Humboldt Bay region of northern California began circa 1543 when Bartolomé Ferrer, having assumed leadership of the Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo expedition after Cabrillo's death, guided his ships along the California coast in an effort to assess the area's potential for settlement or trade. The ships advanced probably as far north as the mouth of the Rogue River in southern Oregon, at one point noting the landform later known as Cape Mendocino. Although no more extensive exploration was undertaken at this time, the area was claimed for the King of Spain. In 1579 Sir Francis Drake, the famous English sea captain and pirate, while searching for a quiet harbor in which to repair his brig and gather food-stuffs, probably entered Trinidad Bay, but did not disembark.

Over the next several years only brief exploratory visits were made to the Humboldt Bay region, officials of New Spain being occupied with business elsewhere. It was not until the threat of Russians moving down the northwest coast in the search for furs, coupled with possibilities of a strong thrust into the region by the British Hudson's Bay Company, began to cause Spain concern as to the future of her possessions there that Bruno de Heceta and Juan Francisco de la Bodega y Cuadra were hastily dispatched up the coast circa 1775 to reconnoiter the situation, making the first authenticated landing in the area at Trinidad Bay where they took possession of the area in a formal ceremony intended to unquestionably establish Spain's rights in northern California.

In 1792 Captain George Vancouver, the first British navigator to cruise the coast since Drake's voyage over 200 years earlier, sailed up along the shore but did not disembark. A year later his trip was more leisurely, the ships lingering for three days at Puerto de la Trinidad charting the bay and studying the Indians. More and more vessels continued to sail the coast-line, but more intensive exploratory activity did not resume until 1805 when Captain Jonathan Winship, commander of an American ship engaged in the Russian fur trade, explored the present Big Lagoon and Trinidad Bay areas in the search for sea otter. The next year he discovered and charted the quiet harbor that later became known as Humboldt Bay, and from 1809 to 1811 his and other trading vessels returned several times looking for otter furs. Humboldt Bay was finally named in 1850 when Lieutenant Douglass Ottinger of the U.S. Navy sailed north from San Francisco on the Laura Virginia up toward the mouth of the Mad River and along Trinidad Bay to the mouth of Redwood Creek. Entering the large bay south of Trinidad Head, the party members named it in honor of Baron von Humboldt, a famous naturalist and scientist.<sup>1</sup>

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1. The above summary utilized information from "Humboldt County," typescript circulated by the Eureka Elementary Schools, 1959, pp. 1, 3-5, and Edwin C. Bearss, History, Basic Data, Redwood National Park, Del Norte and Humboldt Counties, California (Washington: U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1969), pp. 17-27.



## B. Land Expeditions

As a result of zealous fur-trading activity along the northwest coast leading to the eventual decimation of the sea otter herds, Russian and American coastal trading operations began to decline. British and American trappers still operated in the interior valleys of the northwest, however, and occasionally members of this community were able to find their way to the coast. As early as 1828 Jedediah Smith of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company, burdened with over 300 head of horses and mules, passed through northern California intending to further explore the northwest area and appraise its fur trade possibilities. He apparently passed along the Trinity River drainage to Hoopa Valley and Weitchpec, ultimately reaching Gans Prairie. Some members of the expedition penetrated the redwood forests and possibly reached Big Lagoon.

Following Smith's brief reconnaissance, no other large-scale expedition entered the area until 1849 when Dr. Josiah Gregg organized a party of eight men from Rich Bar on the Trinity River to accompany him in the search for a close seaport on the west coast that would enable opening of a new supply route to the Trinity River mines. Incentive for the journey was provided by local Indians who mentioned that a large bay surrounded by prairie lands lay immediately to the west.<sup>3</sup> A scientist at heart, Gregg also intended to take notes on the geography and Indian inhabitants of the region. Packing food for ten days, Gregg and his party chose essentially the same route as Smith, discovering and following the South Fork of the Trinity before passing over snow-covered mountains and eventually halting at or near a section of the Bald Hills, which were described as "like an open orchard of oaks and with fine grass."<sup>4</sup> Discovering they were north of Trinidad, Gregg turned south before attempting to cross Redwood Creek. After several harrowing days of fighting their way through dense, almost impenetrable, redwood forests with their horses and mules, where food for men and animals was scarce or non-existent, Gregg and his companions finally reached the coast just south of Little River. They followed the shore north for only a short distance, discovering Trinidad Head but turning back at Big Lagoon and proceeding further south past the mouth of Mad River toward Elk River and Table Bluff.

The party camped on the northeast shore of Humboldt Bay, at the later site of Union. The men also reached and named the site of later Bucksport and the Eel and Van Duzen rivers. At this point the party split, L.K. Wood,

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2. Polly McW. Bickel, A Study of Cultural Resources in Redwood National Park (Denver: U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1979), p. 35.

3. Chad L. Hoopes, Lure of Humboldt Bay Region (Dubuque, Ia.: Wm. C. Brown Book Co., 1966), p. 14.

4. Blue Lake (Cal.) Advocate, 3 January 1957, found in Mrs. Eugene F. Fountain, History of Humboldt County, [Blue Lake, 1954-58], compilation of issues and clippings, p. 348.



Thomas Seabring, David A. Buck, and Isaac Wilson ascending the Eel to Sonoma County over a route that later became the Sonoma Trail, reaching home in February. Gregg, J.B. Truesdell, Van Duzen, and Charles C. Southard attempted to go south along the mountain range nearer the coast, but had to retreat due to heavy snow and deep canyons. Turning east toward the Sacramento Valley, Gregg's companions reached there in February after the death of their leader.<sup>5</sup>

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5. "Humboldt County," pp. 7-8; Hoopes, Lure of Humboldt Bay Region, p. 21.



## II. Description of Land Areas in Humboldt County

### A. Coastal Lowlands Merge into the Redwood Forest

The topography of Humboldt County consists basically of three sections. Near the coast are the lowlands, consisting of alluvial flats along the river courses and generally sloping terrain. The rich soil here ensured the area's early settlement, for homes and farms could be established with a minimum of effort.

### B. The Redwood Forest and Redwood Creek Basin

Further in from the shoreline is the famous belt of redwood forest that stretches in a continuous line north and south from a point near the Oregon-California boundary south along the Coast Range of mountains into Monterey County, varying in width from eight to fifteen miles. Before the coming of the white man and the consequent clearing of land and building of roads, the stands of timber here formed an almost impassable barrier.

Running through the southern end of the forest is Redwood Creek, whose course of over 100 miles forms an elongated basin measuring about 56 miles from northwest to southeast and with a maximum width of about 7 miles. This basin on the west slopes of the Coast Range drains an area of about 283 square miles and enters the Pacific about 50 miles south of the Oregon boundary. The only urban-type settlement in the basin is Orick, located about 2-1/2 miles above the mouth of Redwood Creek. The main valley near the town and along the lower reaches of Prairie Creek has been developed for agricultural use. Hay is the principal harvested crop, while the uplands and alluvial valleys are also used to pasture large herds of dairy cattle and other livestock. The major industry of the basin as a whole centers around lumber, four large mills having been established near Orick with several smaller ones scattered along the lower reaches of Redwood Creek and along Prairie Creek.

The dominant topographic feature of the Redwood Creek basin is the rugged mountainous portion covered by dense stands of first- and second-growth redwood and cut by narrow, deep stream channels. Vegetation in the valleys is native grass with some brush and willows found along the stream-banks. Bordering the creek are from 3,000 to 5,000 acres of bottomland that in earlier times were covered by a thick growth of cottonwood, alder, salmon brush, and some spruce that had to be cleared away before farms could be established to utilize the fertile soil enriched by river sediments. Adjacent to the heavy timber are areas of lesser density containing some deciduous but mostly evergreen growth. Pine, oak, spruce, fir, and alder forests clothe the river valleys and hill slopes to the furthestmost limits of the county, and patches of pine and oak extend up the mountainsides.<sup>1</sup>

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1. U.S. Army Engineer District, San Francisco, Corps of Engineers, "Report of Survey on Redwood Creek, Humboldt County, for Flood Control and Allied Purposes," in Letter From the Secretary of the Army Transmitting a Letter from the Chief of Engineers, Department of the Army, Dated June 21, 1962 . . . on a Survey of Redwood Creek, Humboldt County California, Authorized by the Flood Control Act, Approved September 3, 1954 (Washington: USGPO, 1962), pp. 5, 9, 11, in Humboldt County Pamphlets, Humboldt County Collection, Humboldt State University Library, Arcata, Ca.; John Mathewson Eddy, comp., In the Redwood's Realm, 2d ed. (San Francisco: D.S. Stanley & Co., 1893), p.4.



### C. Bald Hills

Inland from the timber belt lie larger tracts of open prairie that were cultivated slowly through the years as means of transportation improved. The Coast Range commencing at the ocean increases gradually in height for 15 to 20 miles eastward until it culminates in an elevation of about 4,000 feet marking the long ridge of prairie land known as the Bald Hills. This open mountain country is the largest of the three distinct topographical sections of the county, running from north to south but often appearing barren and unproductive because the hills lose their verdure earlier than do lands nearer the sea. These hills have been primarily utilized for the grazing of flocks of sheep and herds of cattle because of the nutritious native grass that covers the slopes and grows and remains green from fall until midsummer. In June the grasses ripen and the hills become brown, but the dry feed still retains its nutritive qualities and cattle fatten on it. The hills are not completely destitute of timber, however, for scrub oaks are found scattered over the ridges, and groves of spruce and firs grow on the shady ridgesides in moist places. Long-leaved pine is found on higher elevations near any of the many springs. The soil, often several feet deep on top of the ridges, has a burnt red appearance, and in some places masses of volcanic rocks protrude from the ridgetops.

In lower moist spots, and particularly on the alluvial flats near the streams, grass and clover grow lushly. The region is well watered, with springs found even near the tops of the ridges. Rainfall is abundant. Because the hills are seldom covered with snow for long periods of time, cattle are able to feed year-round, although knowledgeable stockmen have evidently found it economical to grow and house hay and grain with which to feed their stock for short periods during the winter. Large ranches of several thousand acres each have engaged in the stockraising business in the Bald Hills, only one-sixth of their area being somewhat level and thus suitable for agricultural purposes.<sup>2</sup>

### D. Valleys and Prairies

The Humboldt County region contains several productive agricultural valleys. The Eel River Valley is possibly the most noted for its productivity, although the Mattole River also drains extremely fertile lowlands, enclosed by lofty hills, that have proven conducive to farming, dairying, and sheepraising. Further east notable farmlands are found in Hoopa Valley, a level, rich prairie supporting groves of oak and cottonwood. Other important valleys and prairies are those of the Mad, Elk, and lower Trinity rivers.

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2. Wallace W. Elliott, History of Humboldt County, California . . . Including Biographical Sketches (San Francisco: Wallace W. Elliott & Co., 1882), pp. 123, 132; D.L. Thornbury, California's Redwood Wonderland of Humboldt County (San Francisco: Sunset Press, 1923), p. 8; Eddy, In the Redwood's Realm, p. 63.



### III. Settlement of Humboldt County

#### A. Influence of Mining Activity on the Trinity River

The establishment of towns in Humboldt County began in the early part of 1850 as a direct result of mining activities on the Trinity River and the anticipated demands of the mining trade. It was in the winter of 1849 when rains had closed the mines in the region and their supply routes, threatening a shortage of provisions in the season ahead, that Gregg and his followers set out to find a closer supply point. His explorations and discoveries in the area around Humboldt Bay and the subsequent building of trails and establishment of trade with the Trinity and Klamath River sections were the basis for the rise and development of Trinidad, Union, and other settlements in the region. The earliest towns were quite naturally, therefore, located along the harbors into which supplies could be shipped from San Francisco for transport to the mining regions.

#### B. Trinidad

Trinidad was the earliest townsite in the region, its location on a small bay seeming to promise continued growth. By April 1850 a town government had been organized, and before long, streets and blocks were platted. Miners, settlers, and land speculators streamed into the hamlet which received a steady supply of provisions and other goods that were then transported overland to the goldfields. In the fall gold was discovered in the sands between Klamath and Trinidad, and an aura of prosperity enveloped the town. Claims were immediately filed to the north around Gold Bluffs, along the Trinity trail, and south toward Little River and Dow's Prairie.<sup>1</sup> Although Trinidad eventually became the Klamath County seat, its days as a major business center for the region were numbered. Agricultural activity in the area was never either extensive or productive due to the broken nature of the terrain and the heavy timber growth. Ultimately contributing to the relapse of the town's fortunes was a decrease in gold mining activity in the area due to the expense of separating gold particles from the sand. As the town's population declined so did the few attempts at agriculture in the area.

#### C. Humboldt City

A short-lived settlement founded circa 1850, Humboldt City was established by the Laura Virginia Association on the shores of Humboldt Bay directly across from the harbor entrance. Before the town could develop into a strong shipping port for the mining region, the tides washed it away.

#### D. Union (Arcata)

About this same time Union (later Arcata) was founded by members of the Josiah Gregg expedition who, remembering the beauty of the spot, returned here in April 1850. Its attractive location on the shores of a deep harbor was enough to promote its initial settlement as the new point of embarkation for the Trinity River mines, but its more-enduring attractions consisted of surrounding good agricultural lands and timber stands.

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1. Owen C. Coy, The Humboldt Bay Region, 1850-1875 (Los Angeles: The California State Historical Association, 1929), p. 96.



By 1853 Union was the most populous town in the region and the business center of the mining trade. The choicest farm lands in the vicinity were taken up immediately. In this same year Humboldt County was organized, and Union seemed the natural selection for the county seat. Despite all her promising attributes, Union dropped to second place in area importance when in 1856 the county seat was moved to Eureka. A reduction in mining trade because of her less convenient harbor ensured Union's decline.

#### E. Eureka

Eureka was the last of the early settlements around the bay. Established in May 1850 by the Union Company and the Mendocino Exploring Company, she expanded rapidly after 1856 because of a good harbor and thriving industries, becoming the foremost town in Humboldt County.



#### IV. Packing Trade in Humboldt County

##### A. Spread of Mining in Northern California

Soon after California was acquired by the United States in 1848 by the terms of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, interest accelerated in exploring the remoter parts of her northern coast. No activity in this direction commenced immediately, however, due to a preoccupation with gold after its discovery at Sutter's mill in January 1848. As new mining districts opened around Sacramento, hopeful goldseekers poured in, with the fields naturally extending further north after Major Pierson B. Reading found rich gold deposits in the gravel bars of the Trinity River shore. The first commercial trading activity in the Humboldt Bay region was carried on wholly with the lower Trinity River mining community, merchandise from Union or Trinidad not at first going further than its North Fork, which constituted the entire market for merchandise from the Humboldt Bay area for two years or more. Gradually settlements began to extend lower down the Trinity to New River. Gold discoveries on the Klamath soon opened a new field for trade and enterprise, as did succeeding ones on the Salmon River, and both these regions steadily gained in importance until they began to overshadow the original trading area.<sup>1</sup> By virtue of their locations on Humboldt Bay, steadily-growing entry point for trade goods into the area, Trinidad and Union were the natural outfitting stations for these two major districts of the region: the Trinity mines, with their business center at Weaverville, and the Klamath and Salmon River mines of which Orleans Bar was the main camp, supply station, and business center.

##### B. Humboldt Bay Becomes the Major Supply Point for the Mines

Mining supplies were first brought in to the Trinity River region from the upper Sacramento Valley over the Trinity Mountains via a long and difficult trail. The excessive amount of rehandling and repacking of freight required during the various stages of the journey resulted in exorbitant prices to the miners. In large part it was the difficulties and expense involved in receiving goods from this direction that prompted Josiah Gregg to seek a shorter supply route and that resulted in the shift of trading operations to Humboldt Bay.

##### C. Trinidad Initiates the Mining Trade

Trinidad enjoyed her greatest prosperity as a supply station for the Trinity and Klamath River mines, ultimately boasting a population of 2,500 to 3,000 and a complement of twenty-odd stores. The trade goods shipped into her port from San Francisco were transferred to pack trains for transport to the mines, the sure-footed mule being the only form of conveyance that could easily traverse the dense redwood forests, high hills, and steep ravines. Three large pack trains operated out of Trinidad: Alexander Brizard, 125 mules; Thomas Bair, 60 mules; and William Lord, 75 mules. Due to the high cost of upkeep, the packing business alone was usually insufficient to sustain its operators, the most successful packers holding their

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1. Anthony J. Bledsoe, Indian Wars of the Northwest: A California Sketch (Oakland: Biobooks, 1956), pp. 219-20.



position only by dabbling concurrently in other commercial activities, such as managing stores in the various mining towns in the interior.<sup>2</sup> The opening of trails to the mines also profited the farmers of the county, who were now able to find an additional outlet for their crops that resulted in rewarding sales.

In the summer of 1850 a supply trail was run from Trinidad to the mining regions in northern Humboldt and Del Norte counties that passed along the coast to Big Lagoon and then directly east to the Klamath River and on up to the mining district. This route intersected a trail leading up from Klamath City, a newly-established town just above the mouth of the Klamath River. When Klamath City disappeared, this early Trinidad trail was replaced by another that took a more direct course to the junction of the Klamath and Trinity rivers. The "Trinidad Trail" as it was called ran north from Trinidad along the coast to Big Lagoon, then turned east, crossing Redwood Creek near the present Tall Trees Grove, surmounted the hills near Elk Camp (at the later Sherman Lyons ranch), and then followed along the Bald Hills ridge through French Camp and ultimately descended into the Hoopa Valley near the head of Pine Creek in the vicinity of Martin's Ferry and Weitchpec, an Indian village 1-1/2 miles above Orleans Bar at the junction of the Klamath and Trinity rivers. This trail also intersected a route leading up the Klamath from its mouth to Martin's Ferry. From the junction of the Trinity and Klamath rivers, pack trains could either turn right to Orleans or Sommes Bar or trend left up to the Klamath sites.<sup>3</sup>

In 1854 John Daggett, heading for the rich diggings on the Salmon River, landed at Trinidad and followed this trail. Carrying blankets on their backs, he and his companions "passed first through the grand belt of old redwood trees, a sight long to be remembered, thence over the bald-hill country, abounding at that time in elk, then crossing the Klamath river at Young's Ferry, a few miles below the Trinity river. . . ."<sup>4</sup> Another miner, John Carr, took off with his partners from Trinidad for the goldfields with both their mules and themselves packed to the hilt. Heading north via Big Lagoon, whose beaches were sometimes knee-deep in sand, they proceeded through the redwoods: "The trail ran through a good deal of redwood forests. I got my first view of the immense size of

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2. Charles L. Ehlers, "The Packing Trade--from Union to the Mines," 3 May 1963, pp. 17-18, MS in Humboldt County Collection, Humboldt State University Library, Arcata, Ca.; Bair held a U.S. Government contract to pack supplies and mail between Arcata and Hoopa besides furnishing mules and horses to transport government personnel to Hoopa. Brizard ran stores at Weitchpec, Orleans, Sommes Bar, and Hoopa, while Lord supplied stores at Orleans and private individuals along the Klamath River. Oscar Lord, "Pack Train Days in Humboldt County," in Hyman Palais, ed., The Humboldt County Historical Society, Eureka (Eureka, Ca., 1954), p. 24.

3. Coy, Humboldt Bay Region, p. 68; Ehlers, "Packing Trade," pp. 9-10.

4. John Daggett, "Reminiscences of a Pioneer," written from Black Bear, Siskiyou County, Daggett Scrapbook, 4:5, in California State Library, Sacramento.



the redwood trees on that trip." Finally "one day, on coming out on a prairie, we beheld a great sight. The prairie seemed a large one; scattered all over it were big oak trees, giving it the appearance of an old orchard in the Eastern States, and, grazing quietly, were hundreds of elk, that seemed to take no more notice of us than so many tame cattle grazing in their pasture at home."<sup>5</sup>

Two persons are mentioned in connection with construction of the Trinidad Trail. One is "Big Ed Moore," a Klamath Indian who was reportedly responsible for the initial route from Luffenholtz, south of Trinidad, through the Bald Hills to Weitchpec and Orleans. In the spring of 1855 the citizens of Trinidad are said to have given one Captain Snyder of Hoopa the contract to reopen a trail through the redwoods to the Bald Hills, the earlier one being impassable because of fallen timber. A bridge built across Redwood Creek on this "new Trinidad Trail" lasted less than one year.<sup>6</sup>

During the Red Cap War of 1855 pack trains on the Trinidad Trail were subject to sporadic attack by Indians, causing a severe curtailment of traffic. In efforts to safeguard the route and also protect the Bald Hills ranches, a detachment of U.S. troops was posted at Elk Camp in the early 1860s. With construction of a new wagon road in the 1890s connecting Orick and the Bald Hills, the section of the early packing trail from Big Lagoon to Elk Camp was abandoned. In later years Arcata-Redwood Lumber Co. reopened the stretch of old trail from Elk Camp to Redwood Creek and the Tall Trees Grove site as a public relations gesture.<sup>7</sup>

#### D. Other Towns in the Region Establish Trade Links

Perceiving Trinidad's initial success in the packing trade, communities further south decided to establish ties with the Trinity River mines also. Humboldt City first cut a trail following up the Elk River into Kneeland Prairie and then passing in a southerly direction across to the Trinity River. This route was also used by Eureka. Union constructed several trails: one commenced a short distance east of Glendale, continued to Liscom Hill, down along the North Fork of Mad River to Fawn and Elk prairies, down into Redwood Creek at Beaver's place, on to the Hower homestead, through the Hooker Ranch, and on to French Camp, Martin's Ferry, Weitchpec, and Orleans Bar, intersecting the Trinidad Trail near the mouth of the Trinity River; another one ran through Kneeland Prairie, intercepting the Humboldt City trail; a third led via Bald Mountain to the main branch of the Trinity River and on to Weaverville.<sup>8</sup>

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5. John Carr, "Wanderings Between Trinidad and Weaverville," Chapt. X, Pioneer Days in California (Eureka Times, 1891), pp. 103-4.

6. Arcata Union, April 1909, in Susie Baker Fountain Papers, 108:16, in Humboldt County Collection, Humboldt State University Library, Arcata, Ca.

7. Bearss, Basic Data, Redwood National Park, p. 133.

8. Coy, Humboldt Bay Region, pp. 68-70; Ehlers, "Packing Trade," p. 11.



## E. Statistics of the Packing Business

A loaded pack train of at least 30 to 40 mules required seven days to travel the 78 miles from Arcata to Orleans, whereas the return trip unloaded took only five. The summer and fall of 1850 saw the greatest excitement in the mining districts and this flurry of activity continued on into the winter. Although many mules had been driven to Trinidad from Sonoma in May 1850, more soon had to be brought in. Due to the rigors of the trail and the necessity of shipping in all supplies to Trinidad by boat, high prices were asked of and obtained from the miners. Freight from Trinidad to the Salmon River mines could cost as high as \$2.00 a pound. When Union began packing activities in the summer of 1850, an average of 100 mules a week left for the mines, carrying \$4,000 to \$5,000 worth of goods. Over 400 mules left in one week during 1857 for the Klamath, Salmon, Trinity, and Hoopa valleys. Six hundred left another week, their average load of 275 to 300 pounds per animal meaning a gross weight of over 165,000 pounds of goods. The crew accompanying a train usually consisted of a boss packer, an additional packer for each ten mules, plus a cook.<sup>9</sup>

## F. Importance of the Packing Trade Wanes

The mining district around Orleans continued yielding profits for many years. As Trinidad declined in importance as a seaport and supply point for the mines, Union assumed her leadership role. Her well-maintained trails to both the Klamath and Trinity river mines assured a strong position in the packing trade, with a business amounting to more than half a million dollars annually. The only real competitor with Humboldt Bay for trade with the Trinity region had been Shasta City, located near the head of the Sacramento Valley. Because her incoming freight had to be shipped upriver to Red Bluff, from there by wagon road to Shasta, then by mule train up Clear Creek and across the Trinity Mountains to the Trinity River, rehandling and high freight rates on the Sacramento River and beyond raised the price of goods considerably.<sup>10</sup> By 1857, due to this prohibitive cost and the problems inherent in having to ship by boat, wagon, and mule, Union had outstripped her rival and continued a profitable commercial mining trade for the next five years.

Early in the 1860s hostility between the Indians and the miners and settlers became so great that packing became a dangerous and unprofitable business. The intimate relationship that had existed for so long between the Trinity and Humboldt Bay regions gradually weakened. The mining district along the Klamath was also affected by the hostility of the Redwood Creek and Hoopa Indians at this time, causing trade with them to fall off. Even though some commercial activity with the mines resumed after the Indian problems were settled, it never again was as important a factor in the Humboldt Bay regional economy as it had been during earlier years. From this time on the mining population began to shift toward the Scott and Shasta valleys, enabling other sections to compete more successfully for the trade.<sup>11</sup> Around Humboldt Bay the time was nearing for the ascendancy of an agriculturally-based economy.

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9. Lord, "Pack Train Days," quoted in Ehlers, "Packing Trade," p. 11; Coy, Humboldt Bay Region, p. 69; Elliott, History of Humboldt County (1882), p. 209; Lord, "Pack Train Days," in Palais, Humboldt County Historical Society, p. 24.

10. Coy, Humboldt Bay Region, pp. 70, 72.

11. Ehlers, "Packing Trade," p. 24; Coy, Humboldt Bay Region, p. 71.



By the time commercial activity between the Humboldt Bay region and the mining districts of the Trinity, Klamath, and Salmon river areas had begun to diminish, the packing trade had already played a monumental role in the development of this northern California region. By 1857, in fact, the entire internal commerce of the northern California counties was carried on on mule-back, the trains providing the main commercial link between the coast and interior settlements. They were responsible for the growth of Trinidad and Union and enabled miners to continue their search for wealth, farmers to enjoy a profitable outlet for their agricultural products, and some of the early settlers in the more isolated sections of Humboldt, Klamath, and Siskiyou counties to get the provisions, furniture, and mining equipment so necessary to their continued existence.



## V. Extension of Settlement

### A. The Wilderness is Slowly Tamed

During the years that the Humboldt Bay region served as the main shipping point to the goldfields, a preoccupation with mining-related activities on the part of the earliest inhabitants led to neglect of the other potential resources of the area. The towns of Trinidad, Union, and Eureka attracted at first a transient population concerned mostly with land and townsite speculation and easily lured away by the promises of the rich mining districts. It was not until the initial wave of excitement over the mines and related speculative activity had waned somewhat that the desire for some permanency of social institutions began to be felt. Many speculators stayed on to become residents of the bay region, while many who had journeyed to the mining fields returned to try their fortunes in more stable occupations. The nomadic spirit that had characterized the earliest wave of population began to seek more secure roots as the natural advantages of the Humboldt Bay region began to be noted. This change from a shifting society to a more settled lifestyle, always difficult and gradual in mining districts, meant that agricultural lands would take on added importance and influence the spread of settlement.<sup>1</sup> One deterrent to rapid growth of the area was the fact that the Humboldt Bay region was only accessible by an expensive steamship ride, which tended to prolong its isolation and mean that only restricted growth would take place for the next several years.

The heavy timber forests bordering Humboldt Bay and stretching along the interior were considered both an aid and a hindrance to settlement. Those stands near the water were early seen to be of commercial value, attracting a class of businessmen determined to take advantage of the great industrial possibilities here. In more remote sections timbered land was avoided, for its heavy growth rendered the clearing of fields burdensome and unprofitable. The forest around Eureka retarded her development at first because it drastically limited agricultural opportunities. As lumber and other commercial interests became more important, Eureka became a leading shipping port of the bay.

Although at first the agricultural population of the region was very small, by the late 1850s settlement had spread over all the suitable lands near the bay. Open to settlement without much labor or expense had been the rich bottomlands stretching between the Mad and Eel river valleys and the narrow strip north of Mad River including and extending north from Dow's Prairie. The Bear and Mattole River valleys along the southern coast attracted farmers and ranchers while the Elk River and Salmon Creek alluvial plains proved excellent agricultural sections. Circa 1850 the broad, fertile valley along the lower stretches of the Eel River was settled, and through the years this area became a thriving community.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Coy, Humboldt Bay Region, pp. 95, 104-5.

2. Ibid., pp. 95-97, 100; "Early History of Humboldt County," Humboldt County, California, Superintendent of Schools, Curriculum Department, p. 7, Humboldt County Collection, Humboldt State University Library, Arcata, Ca.



## B. Settlement Penetrates the Interior

As the bay area filled, settlers began to push into the more remote fertile valleys and prairie lands lying in and beyond the redwood belt. Isolation in the interior was extreme. Roads were actually only trails, fraught with numerous dangers, while villages, usually merely a single ranch or several houses sharing a fertile prairie or plain, were far apart and often separated by high mountain ranges, rivers, or thick forests. These isolated tracts ultimately became centers of small communities, such as those near Bald Mountain and on Kneeland Prairie. The long line of Bald Hills extending along the interior between the redwood belt and the more rugged Trinity Mountains was particularly attractive to those seeking rich grazing lands, and by 1855 farmers were being encouraged to settle there. Accordingly many located on Redwood Creek and the upper Mad River, and were the folk who suffered most during the ensuing Indian wars. Farther east along the Trinity and Klamath rivers good agricultural land was scarce with the exception of Hoopa Valley, which supported large crops by 1859 and was a prosperous agricultural community long before it was appropriated for an Indian reservation.

The most productive agricultural lands in Humboldt County were found, of course, primarily in the river valleys and bottomlands where alluvial sediment formed the basis of a rich soil. Redwood Creek, for instance, offered about 3,000 to 5,000 acres of good bottomland for farming purposes. Other areas conducive to farming existed, however, that were not connected with the principal rivers of the county, such as on Dow's and Kneeland prairies and in the Bald Hills.

## C. Crops and Livestock

The period 1858 to 1870 saw little progress in agricultural development, sheep and cattle being grazed in pastures next to fields supporting only a rudimentary form of agriculture. Wheat was the first grain developed in the county, due to assurances of a reliable market and good prices. Oats, barley, buckwheat, and hay soon followed, while a fruit industry producing such varieties as apples, pears, peaches, plums, and cherries became well developed by 1860.<sup>3</sup>

Cattle were being brought into the Redwood Creek area as early as the 1850s, a September 1856 newspaper article mentioning that nearly 200 head had entered the county from the Sacramento Valley in one drove, intended for the ranch of J. P. Albee at Redwood Creek on the Klamath trail.<sup>4</sup>

A year later reference appears to cattle being raised at Elk Camp in the Bald Hills.<sup>5</sup> A few animals were later driven south from Oregon. In 1858 cattle importation increased, the greatest number coming from the Willamette Valley and being driven into grazing districts in the Bald Hills and Bear and Mattole river valleys.<sup>6</sup>

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3. Michael Berry, "A Study of the Growth and Development of Agriculture and Fruit Growing in Humboldt County, 1850-1900," pp. 6, 8, 12, MS in Humboldt County Collection, Humboldt State University Library, Arcata, Ca.

4. Fountain Papers, 92:279.

5. Ibid., p. 280.

6. Coy, Humboldt Bay Region, p. 115.



During the years before the Indian wars, cattle raising developed to such an extent that great herds could be found along the southern coast in the Bear and Mattole river districts and throughout the open country across the redwood belt, mainly along Yager Creek, on the upper Mad River, and in the Bald Hills along Redwood Creek. Sheep were becoming somewhat of a factor in the livestock industry by 1858, but would not become a rival industry to cattle raising until much later.

The progress of agricultural development in Humboldt County was adversely influenced by the depressing effects of the Indian wars on the settlers of the region, greatest havoc, as stated earlier, being wrought in the Redwood Creek and Mad River districts.



## VI. The Indian Wars

### A. Disruption of the Native Population by White Encroachment

Immigration to California by settlers and goldseekers proceeded at a rapid pace. The swift penetration and exploration of every section of this new area resulted in much sacrifice for the Indian population, including loss of property and life. Although during the early mission days some Indians had been partly acculturated, bands of unconverted native peoples who had never accepted the whites still lived in the interior valleys, foothills, and mountains of California. The section of northern California that contained no reservations and that was not managed by Indian agencies was extensive, drained by the Salmon, Klamath, Trinity, Redwood, Mad, and Eel rivers and their tributaries and extending as far south as the vicinity of Cape Mendocino. Bledsoe estimates that 10,000 Indians resided within these boundaries divided into bands or tribes subdivided into rancherias and families.<sup>1</sup>

Only in northern California did the Indian groups offer enough resistance to the white invasion to merit serious action on the part of the Regular Army. They had earlier opposed the trappers and now wreaked their ire on the immigrants and miners who were threatening to overrun their homeland, located in the watersheds of the Trinity, Klamath, and Pit rivers in California, and stretching from the headwaters of the Sacramento to the Oregon border and toward the coast. More important tribes here included the Yurok, Karok, Tolowa, Hupa, Wintun, Shasta, and Klamath. Culturally they were almost identical though unconnected politically. They were differentiated by the whites only as to locale or leader.<sup>2</sup>

Indian groups of the Humboldt Bay area consisted of the Chilula, inhabiting the Bald Hills and located on or near lower Redwood Creek from near the inland edge of the redwood belt to a few miles above Minor Creek; the Hupa, located on the middle course of the Trinity River and its branches, particularly in Hupa Valley and on New River; the Mattole, located on the Bear River and Mattole River drainages and also on the Eel River and Van Duzen forks; and the Wintu, in the upper Sacramento River Valley and upper Trinity River valley. A subdivision of this latter group was located in the Bald Hills near the headwaters of Panther and Redwood creeks.<sup>3</sup> These Bald Hills Indians bore a bad reputation among the packers because their lifestyle was more nomadic than that of natives along the Klamath and Trinity rivers.<sup>4</sup> The clans of the north and of the hills were considered much fiercer than the groups populating the lower Sacramento. While the coastal Indians and those on Mad River were initially friendly, the mountain tribes remained quite resentful of white encroachment. Even the more peaceful Indians unfortunately soon fell victim to the hatred for their race acquired by settlers and miners during their experiences earlier on the Great Plains.

1. Bledsoe, Indian Wars, pp. 146-47.

2. Robert M. Utley, Frontiersmen in Blue (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1967), p. 93; Hubert Howe Bancroft, History of California: 1860-1890, Vol. 24 in The Works of Hubert Howe Bancroft (San Francisco: The History Co., 1890), p. 487.

3. John R. Swanton, The Indian Tribes of North America (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1971), pp. 483, 492, 502, 519; Wallace W. Elliott, History of Humboldt County, California, . . . Including Biographical Sketches (San Francisco: Wallace W. Elliott & Co., 1881), p. 152.

4. Robert F. Heizer, ed., George Gibb's Journal of Redick McKee's Expedition Through Northwestern California in 1851 (Berkeley: University of California, 1972),



Isaac Minor recalled in later years that in the beginning good relations existed with the Indians in the Humboldt County area, two or three men finding it possible to go anywhere in the mountains with five or six thousand dollars worth of goods and survive by the judicious use of tobacco. Contributing to this pacific state of affairs was the fact that at that time the Indians did not possess firepower.<sup>5</sup> Problems that soon began plaguing settlers in the county were mainly attributable to wrongs against the Indians perpetrated by miners and a certain ruffian element that was forming in the Klamath and Trinity river mining districts. During the Gold Rush the whites virtually overwhelmed the Indian population of the northern and central parts of the state, obliterating their villages and occupying their hunting and gathering grounds. As the Indians struggled to survive, they turned to robbery and the pilfering of miners and settlers, which led to retaliatory actions and massacres of the innocent and guilty on both sides. The mining boom had unfortunately created a situation in which Indians and whites needed nearly constant protection from each other. Not only mineral districts were involved, but later agricultural lands in the interior, as the mining fever abated and disillusioned prospectors turned to farming. The more numerous and prosperous valley tribes were soon driven from the lush interior valleys and rich river bottoms and were forced to retire to less prolific regions in the mountains or foothills or remain in small rancherias on the outskirts of white settlements. This was a pattern especially characteristic of valleys in the north coast range and around the headwaters of the Sacramento River. Early agrarian and commercial activity always concentrated in the productive regions most thickly populated by aborigines; the process was similar in the mining regions where miners followed the watercourses on which the natives were dependent, driving them farther and farther into the more barren hills and forests.<sup>6</sup>

Agricultural settlements seriously interfered with aboriginal food sources and lifestyles, introducing such detrimental elements as the kidnapping of Indian children; the abuse of women; the interruption of native fishing practices; the plowing of heretofore open lands and consequent disruption of the native grass, seed, and root supply; the elimination of game and small rodents; the burning of trees and shrubs that provided food-stuffs such as nuts and berries; and the fencing of lands for livestock, which severely restricted the gathering of acorns, seeds, and plants. The Bald Hills, whose slopes and ridgetops were quickly appropriated for grazing purposes, were especially valued by the local Indians, who used stalks of the lush native grass in their basketry, personal decoration, and ornamental fabrics.<sup>7</sup>

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5. Fountain Papers, 92:355.

6. Alvin M. Josephy, Jr., The Indian Heritage of America (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1968), p. 332; Sherburne F. Cook, Conflict Between the California Indian and White Civilization (Berkeley: University of California, 1976), p. 280.

7. Cook, California Indian and White Civilization, pp. 288-89; Elliott, History of Humboldt County (1881), p. 152; Heizer, Gibb's Journal, p. 134.



Although most white settlers disapproved of mistreatment of the Indians, they were too involved in making a living or merely too unconcerned to interfere actively on their behalf. As the resentment smoldering within the surrounding Indian community became more obvious, however, farmers began to adopt the attitude espoused by the rougher members of the mining community that no excuse was necessary for recriminations against the native peoples. Indian men, women, and children were viewed as vermin to be eliminated as swiftly and completely as possible. The white objective in California became the removal of all Indians, at the very least to reservations and out of the path of the farmer and miner. Due to this brutal change in Indian policy, hostile Indian elements existed in most parts of California by the end of 1850. In the more crowded areas of Humboldt County the predominant number of the whites tended to curb protestations against injustices, but along the mountain ranges and in the hills where the more independent tribes prevailed who could make occasional alliances and thereby present a broad front of resistance, the situation was much more volatile, these people becoming easily roused by reports of personal affronts and outrages against the Indian population in other sections.<sup>8</sup>

#### B. The Federal Government Attempts a Peace-Making Role

In the summer of 1851 the Secretary of the Interior through the Commissioner of Indian Affairs appointed three commissioners to hold treaty meetings with various Indian tribes in the state of California as provided in an Act of Congress approved September 30, 1850. Redick McKee was one of the three men appointed by President Fillmore, with jurisdiction over the area of coastal ranges north of San Francisco Bay and over all other portions of what was referred to as the Northern District. On August 9, 1851, he left Sonoma escorted by U.S. Army troops under the command of Major H.W. Wessells on an expedition through northern California designed to contact the native populations and formulate treaties. In early October he held a council with the hostiles at Durkee's Ferry at the junction of the Trinity and Klamath rivers. Here various tribes of the area gathered, although neither the Bald Hills nor the Redwood Creek tribes were represented: "Of the Indians of Redwood Creek, called by the whites Bald Hill Indians, little was learned, and none of them could be induced to come in."<sup>9</sup> Here the Treaty of Klamath was signed, and McKee urged the Indians present to exert their influence over the Bald Hills and Redwood Creek tribes to induce them to be friendly to the whites in the vicinity who were also to be informed of the agreements and cautioned to pursue a prudent course in their relations with the Indians. Feeling his mission a success, McKee proceeded up the Klamath where he concluded treaties with other Indians at the mouth of the Salmon River. Although these meetings did not involve all California Indians, they did serve as a forum of sorts for tribes of the northern and central regions.<sup>10</sup>

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8. Bledsoe, Indian Wars, pp. 148-51; Josephy, Indian Heritage, p. 332; Bancroft, History of California: 1860-1890, p. 479.

9. Heizer, Gibb's Journal, p. 139.

10. Ibid., p. 1; Howard B. Melendy, "First Treaty Signed Between the Indians and the United States in the Northwestern Part of California," September 1960, MS in Fountain Papers, 93: 121-2; Hoopes, Lure of Humboldt Bay Region, pp. 36, 48.



The treaties negotiated by the various commissioners were never ratified by the Federal Government or honored, in large part because of the objections raised by most Californians to setting aside good land for Indian use in the form of reservations. Ultimately, however, a reservation system was established and five small areas were set aside among the coastal ranges and central valley regions, more often than not in the midst of Indian-hating populations. Mismanagement and malfeasance in office characterized the operation of these reservations, in addition to general neglect of their Indian inhabitants. The entire Federal Government Indian policy of attempting to colonize Indians in the midst of white settlements was regarded by most pioneers as ineffective and fraudulent. By the end of 1859 the system had largely failed. Of all the counties in California, the five composing the Humboldt Military District suffered most from this inadequate policy.<sup>11</sup>

### C. Unrest and Dissatisfaction Precede a Long Period of Strife

A temporary state of peace existed for a short time after McKee's parleys with the various tribes between Clear Lake and the Trinity River, but when he could not fulfill his promises of supplies and reservations, and in the wake of further white aggressions, hostilities erupted and spread. From 1851 to 1855 there were recurring instances of murder and mutilation in the hills, valleys, and plains of Humboldt County, both Indians and whites being equally guilty of their commission. In 1853 settlers around Humboldt Bay demanded military protection, and two companies were sent to establish a post at Eureka. A high bluff back of Bucksport was selected as the site of Fort Humboldt, consisting of about twelve buildings around a central parade ground. The fort turned out in some ways to be more of a morale factor than of military value, for its garrison was unable to stem the activities of lawless white traders who continued to sell whiskey to the Indians and of gun runners who sold them rifles and ammunition, leading to serious problems in 1855.

In that year miners around the Trinity and Klamath rivers grew fearful of their lives as Indians were seen to be moving in large numbers into the Salmon Mountains. Traders were forbidden to supply them arms and all Indians in Humboldt and Trinity counties were ordered to turn in their weapons. Although some cooperated, the Red Caps around Orleans Bar and a few others refused to comply. Troops were called from Fort Humboldt as the mining community loudly demanded the massacre of all Indians on the Klamath and Salmon rivers. Volunteer troops marched to the Red Cap rancheria to gain their surrender, but the Indians resisted in the vicinity of Weitchpec. Ancient bonds between the valley and mountain Indians were renewed, generating conflict in all sections. The Trinidad and Mad River tribes left their rancherias for the mountains, and in the neighborhood of Redwood Creek a party of Indians attacked and killed several whites. Eureka, fearful the war would spread to the coast, appealed to the state for aid. Soon whites were being killed indiscriminately, the Indians unable or unwilling to determine beforehand which were good and which unfriendly. Mining became a risky business and was almost abandoned because personal safety could not be guaranteed. Supply trains ceased to operate along the Trinidad Trail due to continued harassment. Nobody could travel or work without being armed. During the months it took to rout the obstinate Red Caps from the hills, they were stealing cattle, robbing, and murdering. Finally troops from Fort Humboldt initiated peace talks, the war ending in June 1855 when the last Red Cap was incarcerated on the Klamath River reservation.<sup>12</sup>

11. Utey, Frontiersmen in Blue, p. 107; Hoopes, Lure of Humboldt Bay Region, p. 116; Bledsoe, Indian Wars, pp. 455-56.

12. Fountain Papers, 32:319; Hoopes, Lure of Humboldt Bay Region, pp. 111-12.



By 1856 the Klamath tribes were growing restless and hostile, as were the Hoopa Indians in Hoopa Valley who were objecting to wholesale removal to reservations. The Humboldt Bay tribes were friendly with the Klamath and other mountain clans, and whatever affected one group of these Indians was felt to touch other sections too. Sensing the spread of animosity, white residents in the region became nervous and began moving nearer to the more populated settlements around the bay. During 1856-57 the presence of troops, the vigilance of the citizens, and a hard winter that kept the Indians occupied in a fight for survival combined to keep disturbances down except for minor uprisings. In 1857-58 two new forts were established in the region to deter the hostiles while protecting both them and the whites. In October Lt. George Crook arrived at the Klamath reservation from Fort Crook to establish Fort Ter-Waw about six miles from the mouth of the Klamath. In December Fort Gaston was founded in the Hoopa Valley on the west side of the Trinity River to protect the Hoopas from white encroachments.<sup>13</sup>

In 1858 a new trouble spot developed on the Mad River involving the Wintoons. War broke out in June, and because there were not enough military troops available to provide protection, the citizens of Union and Eureka decided to solve the problem themselves. (A new group of regulars that did arrive at Fort Humboldt in July were considered deficient in military discipline and knowledge of Indian fighting.) A local militia company was quickly organized and a long period of warfare using guerilla tactics began. Inadequate military policies and lackadaisical enforcement of them, a prevalent desire among the whites for total extermination of the Indian population, and the lack of success experienced by the reservations in the region meant that by 1859 tensions had increased to a level dooming prospects of peaceful coexistence. In that year 100 Wintoon women and children were sent to the Mendocino reservation and later 160 more half-famished hostiles went. Meanwhile Indians were killing stock in the Bald Hills area, and a detachment of U.S. Troops under a Captain Lovell was stationed in the area to guarantee protection to life and property.<sup>14</sup>

By 1860 most Wintoons had escaped from the reservation, while at the same time trouble was erupting near the coast at the mouth of the Eel River, near Eureka, on Yager Creek, and in the Mattole Valley. The infamous Indian massacre of that year, in which over two hundred men, women, and children were killed in cold blood on Indian Island, did not help the situation. A few of the captives taken in that action were sent to the Klamath reservation, but soon escaped. By February 1860 ranch owners in the vicinity of the Bald Hills were driving their stock to Hydesville for protection. An indication of their troubles may be discerned from a newspaper article at the time which stated that "Richard Clifford has just arrived from the Bald Hills and reports

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13. Leigh H. Irvine, History of Humboldt County, California, with Biographical Sketches . . . (Los Angeles: Historic Record Co., 1915), p. 69; Fountain Papers, 32:320; Hoopes, Lure of Humboldt Bay Region p. 113; Cook, California Indian and White Civilization, p. 282.

14. Hoopes, Lure of Humboldt Bay Region, pp. 114-15; Cook, California Indian and White Civilization, p. 283.



that the day before yesterday the Indians came in to the settlements and succeeded in collecting and starting about 100 head of cattle belonging to different persons. They came in sufficient numbers to protect themselves, and after starting the cattle drove them by the houses of white men in open sight. The neighborhood was quickly aroused and a party gave chase and succeeded in regaining the most of the stock, losing probably some 20 or 30. The settlers are driving their stock together for better security, but in doing so they are compelled to desert their houses and all the rest of their property."<sup>15</sup>

By October the Indians of the county were busy gathering lead, prying bullets out of trees at the old camping grounds in the redwoods and elsewhere where packers used to amuse themselves by firing at targets. Adequate protection for people and stock was nonexistent except in densely-populated areas. Thousands of cattle had by this time been driven from the Bald Hills and elsewhere to Bear River, causing pasturage there to rapidly become exhausted.<sup>16</sup> From 1861 to 1864 continual fighting and skirmishing characterized the region, driving citizens from the grazing portion of the county which became the scene of bloody conflict. The redwood country was one of the fiercest battlegrounds of the wars, and the site of many important skirmishes.

A letter from Fort Anderson, a military post established at Thomas Bair's place on Redwood Creek, written on August 12, 1862, reported that Redwood Creek was then virtually deserted. The only remaining inhabitant was one J.P. Albee, who had returned alone to harvest his crops after leading his family to safety. Only occasional packtrains still passed through the area, although the weekly visits of the mail carrier continued. Between Arcata and Hoopa no place existed where travelers could find accommodations. Troops had meanwhile been stationed at Elk Camp and a rough stockade erected where packers were afforded protection until a large enough number of them had collected to proceed safely.<sup>17</sup> The situation was later described by Charles A. Murdock: "In times of peace, settlers lived on Mad River, on Redwood Creek, and on the Bald Hills, where they herded their cattle. One by one they were killed or driven in until there was not a white person living between the bay and Trinity River. Mail carriers were shot down . . ."<sup>18</sup> During the Indian troubles of the 1860s ranchers from the Mad River country, Redwood Creek, Bald Hills, and other farming sections suffered greatly, driven from their homes without preparation and so hurriedly that they were usually unable to save possessions. Troubles were also rife in the Mattole Valley, along Yager Creek, in the Van Duzen district, and around Hydesville.

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15. Clipping, "Early Day Happenings--89 Years Ago, February, 1860," Trinity Journal, Feb. 17, 1949, in Fountain Papers, 32:369.

16. Clipping, "Early Day Happenings--89 Years Ago, October, 1860," in ibid., 32:373.

17. Humboldt Times, August 23, 1862, in Fountain Papers, 92:276.

18. Charles A. Murdock, A Backward Glance at Eighty, Recollections and Comment . . . (San Francisco: P. Elder & Co., 1921), p. 62.



Indian fighting, always a difficult procedure, was hampered in Humboldt County by the geography of the region. To the west of the Bald Hills was a very dense forest, impenetrable in some places. To the east was a wide expanse alternately broken by dense forests and bald ridges. To the south the Bald Hills terminated in two principal mountain ranges covered in winter with snow, while northward they sank away into the great redwood forest.<sup>19</sup> Only one distinct advantage existed in fighting Indians in midwinter. Because they could not live on the high mountains, theoretically they could not escape if the volunteers invested the foothills before the sun thawed the snow on the high peaks. Thanks to immoral white traders, the Indians continued to acquire firearms, and soon became skilled in their use. Their guns were not left in the rancherias where they could be captured, but were always either in their hand or hidden in the forest. The Indian policy of dividing their forces in time of war and waylaying whites in parties of ten or fifteen as they found them in deep canyons or gloomy forest glens took an effective toll.

Colonel Francis J. Lippitt had first taken command of the Humboldt Military District, and had scattered his regiment among stations all over the mountainous regions of northern California. His initial policy of leniency toward the Indians had failed and given way to a series of relentless campaigns and clashes resulting in the transfer in October of about 1,000 prisoners to the Round Valley reservation. Escaping from there and merging with others who had fled the Mendocino reservation, hundreds of warriors collected in roving bands to strike at the whites.<sup>20</sup>

The hostiles soon possessed all the Mad River and redwood country as far inland as Hoopa, successfully blocking every channel of traffic between Humboldt, Trinity, and Klamath counties. Angered by the total destruction of homestead properties, the citizens of Humboldt and Klamath counties continued to petition the governor and federal authorities for help, but got nowhere. Prior to the Civil War, military operations in Humboldt County were carried out by regular army and community volunteers. The U.S. soldiers of the Humboldt Military District were regarded as worthless, the officers inefficient and troops grossly mismanaged. Their regulations and methods simply could not deal with the current situation. The peak of the Indian wars in northern California was reached during the Civil War, at a time when the regular troops in the area were sent to the East to serve in the Union Army.

Due to the maturing civil war in Humboldt County, it therefore became necessary during 1861 to 1863 to raise large numbers of local and state volunteers who were considered more qualified anyway to meet the Indian problem. This organizational change in policy was the beginning of a new period of military operations and served as a turning point in the conflict.<sup>21</sup>

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19. "Report of Lieut. Daniel D. Lynn, 6th U.S. Infantry, Ft. Humboldt, Ca., March 28, 1861," in Fountain Papers, 32:396.

20. Utley, Frontiersmen in Blue, p. 228.

21. Hoopes, Lure of Humboldt Bay Region, pp. 121, 124; Andrew M. Genzoli and Wallace E. Martin, Redwood Frontier, Wilderness Defiant . . . (Eureka, Ca.: Schooner Features, 1961), pp. 40-41.



As a result of continued pressure exerted by citizens of northern California for additional military forces, Governor Leland Stanford on February 7, 1863, finally issued a call for local militia and the enlistment of six companies of volunteer military troops, to be called the Mountaineer Battalion, for the specific purpose of operating against the hostile Indians of the Humboldt region. Two companies were mustered into service at Fort Humboldt during April. After four companies had been formed they were sent out to various forts, posts, and camps to replace the California Volunteers. By October six full companies were in the field. On July 13 the headquarters of the Humboldt Military District were given to Lt.-Col. S.G. Whipple of the Mountaineer Battalion.<sup>22</sup>

Although previously participating little in this struggle between the whites and the native population, the Hoopa tribe in 1863 began showing signs of hostility culminating in further open warfare in the redwood region. Together with the redwood area Indians, the Hoopas began gathering food, slaughtering stock on deserted ranches, and even erected a log fort on Redwood Creek near the home of J.P. Albee. On Kneeland Prairie Indians began driving off cattle and hogs. A large area along Redwood Creek and in the Bald Hills was covered with general conflict. In February 1863 the Isaac Minor house and outbuildings on Redwood Creek, the halfway house between Fort Gaston and Arcata, were burned. From the head of Redwood Creek to its mouth not a building was left. While such atrocities were being committed in the Redwood Creek and Mad River regions, the Mountaineer Battalion was being scattered around to various stations in the Klamath, Trinity, Salmon, and Eel river drainages. During the summer warfare commenced on the Trinity River, above Hoopa Valley, and at settlements near the coast. The Mountaineers ignored a great portion of these difficulties while preparing for a vigorous winter campaign by establishing many new posts throughout the district to better control the tribes. Their main concerns at this time were escorting packtrains, guarding houses, and trailing moving bands of savages. The protection of packtrains was the most dangerous part of their work, and it was during this duty that a detachment of Company C participated in a hardfought battle on Redwood Creek near Minor's ranch in July 1863, this encounter turning into one of the most desperate actions of the war. After this battle, the Indians attempted to concentrate their forces, their main base of operations being located somewhere in the Redwood Creek region. August and September brought desolation and death to the Trinity River area, the vast mining region becoming almost depopulated through effects of the ongoing strife.<sup>23</sup>

#### D. An Aggressive Military Policy Stems the Tide of War

At the end of December 1863 the Hoopas called on their Klamath and redwood allies for help in a concerted effort to drive the whites out of the region forever. This encounter that took place in the Hoopa Valley was the first action involving the Volunteers, and brought them defeat. Their lack

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22. Hoopes, Lure of Humboldt Bay Region, p. 129; Utley, Frontiersmen in Blue, p. 228.

23. Coy, Humboldt Bay Region, pp. 180-82; Fountain Papers, 92:352; Hoopes, Lure of Humboldt Bay Region, p. 130; Bledsoe, Indian Wars, pp. 414, 419.



of success was due mainly to coordination problems, not a lack of troops, but Whipple nonetheless immediately requested more forces; when the additional battalions arrived, 350 troops were assembled at Fort Gaston to stage the final assault. A superior knowledge of the country lay with the Indians, however, and aided by faulty planning on the part of the military, they simply could not be defeated. In an effort to end the Indian problem once and for all, two companies of California Volunteers were sent to Fort Humboldt to bolster the Mountaineers, and Whipple was replaced as commander of the district by Col. H.M. Black. This time an aggressive policy turned the tide. Black was a decisive officer who maintained scouts all over the county, especially along the Trinity River and its branches, initiating a succession of fights and skirmishes that left the Indians little time to recuperate their forces or provisions. This vigorous strategy promised good results as a large number of Indians began to surrender.<sup>24</sup>

By the summer of 1864 the Indian troubles in Humboldt County appeared nearly over. After Colonel Black was recalled to the east, his combative tactics were continued by Whipple. Although several Indian groups decided to cease hostilities, those in Hoopa Valley refused to surrender until some action was taken in their behalf curbing the vindictive spirit of the surrounding residents and instituting some compromises. Austin Wiley, appointed Superintendent of Indian Affairs for California by President Lincoln in 1864, without proper authority consummated a peace agreement with the Hoopa tribes in August by giving them the Hoopa Valley. Twelve square miles of the public domain were set aside to be used as a reservation where the Indians agreed to live peacefully after the whites homesteading there were removed. Although this rather high-handed gesture displeased the settlers in the area, who, protesting a reservation so near white settlements, sent resolutions to Washington, the government realized that a continuing war would be more expensive than the small remunerations to settlers for their lands. Congress accepted the treaty, the settlers' lands and improvements were appraised, and by 1866 almost sixty thousand dollars had been paid in claims, the government thereby obtaining full title to the Hoopa Valley lands. An Indian agent was appointed to preside over the inhabitants. In this secluded valley Indian women would be taught to sew and do household chores, while the menfolk followed agricultural pursuits. More buildings would eventually be added to house the staff employed to teach the children in the Indian boarding school.

This treaty, combined with effective military operations elsewhere during 1863 to 1865, paved the way for similar agreements with various tribes in the Humboldt Military District, effectively bringing the Indian campaigns to a close. In early 1865 some scattered bands of hostiles still remained unsubdued, but throughout the rest of the decade the Hoopas remained true to their treaty agreements. Other Indians were gradually brought under control from 1865 to 1866. The Mountaineer Battalion was mustered out of service in April 1865 when a company of regular troops arrived at Fort Humboldt. Troubles in other areas on the Eel River, on the Trinity River, and on Yager Creek continued throughout 1868, but were finally resolved in that year. By this time

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24. Coy, Humboldt Bay Region, p. 186; Hoopes, Lure of Humboldt Bay Region, pp. 130-31.



the Hoopa reservation was well established, while the Smith River, Klamath, and Mendocino reservations were abandoned. Captive Indians on the Peninsula were removed to the Round Valley reservation. Warring Indians from the coast and some from Mendocino County were brought to Fort Gaston in Hoopa Valley, but they later drifted back to homes elsewhere. The headquarters of the Humboldt Military District was moved to Fort Gaston to control the reservation since, with the close of Indian troubles, the army post at Fort Humboldt had served its purpose. The garrison there was relocated in 1866, but the post was maintained until 1870 when it was abandoned and the lands placed for sale. The Hoopas now were left in possession of the lower Trinity, the Yuroks held the lower Klamath, and the Karoks resided on the upper Klamath. Hoopa Valley was set aside for the Hoopa, South Fork, Redwood, and Grouse Creek Indians. All hostiles who had taken part in the recent war were granted amnesty. Some semblance of normality returned as miners prepared to resume work in the Klamath country and packtrails were reopened.<sup>25</sup>

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25. Hoopes, Lure of Humboldt Bay Region, pp. 131-33; Fountain Papers, 93:4-5, 269; Bledsoe, Indian Wars, p. 449; Coy, Humboldt Bay Region, pp. 193-95.



## VII. Resumption of Agriculture and Stock Raising

### A. Sheep Husbandry Increases in Importance

The Indian wars seriously hampered the development of communities and farms in Humboldt County. Large districts of valuable grazing and farm lands had been deserted, and stock, crops, and improvements destroyed as people fled for their lives. After 1863 agricultural pursuits could be continued, and good crops of all kinds were again reported by 1868.<sup>1</sup>

After 1865 the sheep and wool industry became the dominant activity east of the timber belt where land was held in large open ranges and flocks soon numbered in the thousands. The upland districts of the Bald Hills region, characterized by rolling hills supporting a thick growth of native grasses that provided grazing year-round, were admirably suited to mixed husbandry and especially ideal for the nurturing of sheep. The prairie here was free from heavy timber and dense undergrowth, meaning burrs were seldom a problem; it was well watered; and it possessed a dry climate and even temperature throughout the year, negating the need for shelters for the immense flocks of animals. Despite a decline in the industry circa 1894 due to the low price of wool and the encroachment of dairying, cattle-raising, farming, and fruit-growing upon sheep ranges, better conditions prevailed in the early 1900s.<sup>2</sup>

As the market improved, wool grown in Humboldt County came to be considered the choicest grown on the Pacific Coast, and always commanded the highest prices on the open market. Its reputation was built on the cleanliness and high quality of the wool, noted for its long staple and freedom from burrs.<sup>3</sup> Located on Redwood Creek in the early 1900s were the properties of Lyon, Hooker, Bair (sheep and cattle), Berry, Crogan, the Russ estate, and others. Centers for sheepraising also existed in the Mad River and Van Duzen sections, while more ranges stretched clear to the county line on the east. Some were also found to the south in the Eel and Mattole river valleys.<sup>4</sup> By the second decade of the twentieth century one-third of the county was devoted to sheep, some of the heavy demand for woolen garments and blankets being prompted by war conditions.<sup>5</sup>

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1. Berry, "Development of Agriculture and Fruit Growing in Humboldt County," p. 17.

2. Eddy, In the Redwood's Realm, p. 64; Humboldt Times, Humboldt County Souvenir, 2d. ed. (Eureka, Ca.: The Times Publishing Co., 1904), p. 112.

3. Charles W. Ward, Humboldt County, California, the Land of Undeveloped Natural Resources on the Westernmost Rim of the American Continent (Eureka, Ca.: H.S. Crocker Co., 1925), p. 43; Eddy, In the Redwood's Realm, p. 65; Humboldt Times, Humboldt County, California, Wants Your Factory (Eureka, Ca.: The Times Publishing Co., ca. 1917), n.p.

4. Humboldt County Souvenir, p. 112.

5. Humboldt County Wants Your Factory, n.p.



## B. Cattle- and Hog-Raising Activities

The stock industry most directly affected by hostilities had been cattle raising, which had suffered great losses. The large ranges established prior to the Indian wars had been subject to raids until well along in the 1860s, resulting in only a slight margin of profit for ranchers. During the wars feeding grounds were abandoned, but by the early 1900s large herds were again growing to maturity on the slopes, benchlands, and upland ranges of Humboldt County. By 1892 nearly ten million pounds of beef were being produced. The great forests of tan-oak in the county, abounding along the upper stretches of all rivers and their tributaries, and yielding acorns on which hogs fatten, fostered the growth of pork production in the region. The many roots, herbs, bulbs, nuts, and grasses found in the county served as supplementary food sources.

## C. Other Enterprises Expand

After 1865 the exportation of Humboldt County crops to San Francisco began to increase, shipments consisting mainly of potatoes, peas, oats, and sometimes wheat and apples. Agriculture became especially important after 1894 in the fertile Eel and Mad River valleys due to a developing sea trade and the opening of new trails to the mining areas that expanded local markets. Horticulture began receiving steady attention beginning in the 1870s, and in certain parts of the county far enough inland to be free of fog, it was found that a most excellent quality of fruit could be raised. Thereafter, until 1900, there was some retardation of agricultural growth and increased cultivation of fruit. This was accompanied by an expansion of the dairy business.

## D. Small Villages Turn into New Towns

By the early 1870s many small communities along the upper courses of the major rivers and throughout the Bald Hills were developing into full-fledged towns, such as Blue Lake on the Mad River at the terminus of a much-used wagon road, about eight miles from Arcata. With the return of peace, back-country farms were again occupied and new ones taken up. Between 1868 and 1872 minor surveys were carried out and the land nearer the bay was divided into townships. After 1872 the operations of the surveyors became more extensive and included the grazing lands in the Bald Hills. During 1913 a large number of settlers arrived, and Humboldt County was expected to become an important distribution point because of its deep harbor that could serve northern California and southern Oregon.

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6. Ward, Land of Undeveloped Natural Resources, p. 43; Humboldt County Souvenir, p. 112.

7. Bledsoe, Indian Wars, p. 489; Berry, "Development of Agriculture and Fruit Growing," p. 5.

8. Coy, Humboldt Bay Region, pp. 238, 247.

9. Humboldt View Book (Eureka, Ca.: Eureka Printing Co., 1914), n.p.



## E. Ranching Spreads Throughout the Hill Country

The Bald Hills region, considered one of the county's great reserves of wealth, was able to concentrate seriously on farming matters from the late 1800s on. Its climate proved favorable for stockraising, some agriculture (wheat, oats, and barley in the late 1800s and early 1900s), and fruit growing, although the steepness and roughness of the land prohibited much cultivation of the soil. Along its ridges and slopes lands were cheap and water abundant, furnished by the many living springs and perennial streams flowing near the surface. A much rougher land than that found nearer the coast, the Bald Hills have been used through the years mainly as pastureland, though they have also supported small gardens and orchards and a few acres of feed crops. The area's rapid settlement and utilization was delayed first by the Indian wars and then by transportation difficulties imposed by a lack of roads. Its hilliness increased communication problems, and the difficulties and expense of conveying products to market dictated its use primarily as grazing land.

## F. A Summary of Farming Activity in Humboldt County

Although agricultural efforts were started belatedly due to an earlier pre-occupation with the mining and lumber industries, they developed rapidly from 1856 to 1875 despite the major interruption of the Indian wars from 1861 to 1864. From the late 1870s to 1890s farm growth slowed, progress continuing less rapidly than it had from 1865 to 1875, while the total amount of acreage devoted to crops did not increase as fast either. This change was largely due to a growing dairy industry, which began to infringe on the agricultural areas. Fruit growing, whose development and expansion in the first two decades of county history had been secondary to agricultural interests, exhibited increased expansion by the end of the century. From 1875 on not only did the variety of fruit crops increase, but also the number of people engaging in horticulture. Dairying and fruit growing both grew in favor during the 1880s and 1890s as more inland lands were settled and as agricultural activities slowed due to disillusionment brought on by a potatoe blight, falling hay production, and other factors.<sup>10</sup>

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10. Berry, "Growth and Development of Agriculture and Fruit Growing," pp. 39, 63.



## VIII. Early Settlers in the Bald Hills Region

### A. First Ranches Established Along Redwood Creek

By the 1850s a few hardy souls had already penetrated beyond the redwood forests into the rich bottomlands along Redwood Creek and even further up onto the lush ridges of the Bald Hills. Earliest mention of a stock raiser in the area was of James B. Hill, who took up a ranch in the Bald Hills circa 1851, its exact location unknown.<sup>1</sup> Another Humboldt County pioneer was John Albee who came overland to California in 1850, arriving in Humboldt County around 1852 with a band of cattle. He resided first in Weaverville and then in Table Bluff where he ran a hotel. In 1855 he was running a packtrain from Arcata to Klamath, and that same year moved his family to a ranch at the north end of the Redwood Valley on Redwood Creek where he had a large orchard and hotel and became wealthy. In November 1862, after removing his family to Arcata during the Indian trouble, he returned home alone to feed his stock and look after his crops. Always a trusted friend of the redman, he was nevertheless murdered by them as he toiled on his farm.<sup>2</sup>

In 1854 160 acres of land known as the Redwood Ranch, located on the trail between Union and the Trinity River, was sold by one Levi Ellis for \$350 to Bows and Coddington. A deed dated 22 April 1856 concerned the sale by John H. Kimball of Humboldt County to John Ferrill of Union of the "Redwood Ranch," probably the same holding, situated on Redwood Creek where the trail from Union to Hoopa crossed. Sold for \$800, the property consisted of 160 acres plus a house and improvements.<sup>3</sup> By 29 August 1857 the Lake and Saf Ranch on Redwood Creek offered cattle for sale, mentioning also the presence of a bridge here across the water.<sup>4</sup> John Whitney and John Adam Peard were in partnership in 1862, raising mules at the old Jacob Beaver ranch four miles above Camp Anderson (both locations later belonging to the Thomas Bair ranch). Peard had contributed his share by bringing in 36 mares and one jack to the Redwood Creek ranch from the Sacramento Valley. The mares were all destroyed by Indians during an attack on the ranch in July 1862.<sup>5</sup>

### B. The Bald Hills are Populated

During the time of the Indian wars in the early 1860s, three homesteads are mentioned in the vicinity of Elk Camp (Sec. 28, T10N, R2E): those of Saunders (Sanders?), McCongly (McConaghy, Conagha?), and Morton, whose house and crops were valued together at several thousand dollars. The last settler mentioned

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<sup>1</sup>Fountain Papers, 94:52.

<sup>2</sup>Elliott, History of Humboldt County (1882), pp. 203-4.

<sup>3</sup>Fountain Papers, 92:294, 296.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 92:365.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 92:282.



might be William Morton, who owned a stock ranch in the Bald Hills and was proprietor of a hotel at Trinidad around this time. A family of Mortons had settled on the later Sherman Lyons ranch property before the Indian wars broke out.<sup>6</sup>

Henry and Martin Peters, the latter a native of Hanover, Germany, born in 1828 and a packer by trade, held title to a claim with improvements in the Bald Hills known as Elk Camp ranch in 1868. Martin had first settled in Siskiyou County where he worked in the mines. These two also owned property referred to as the Side Hill Place on the road from Elk Camp to Klamath Bluff, on which they raised horses, cattle, and mules.<sup>7</sup> The Henry Williams ranch of 160 acres on the Bald Hills was owned by one Hugh Baird in 1866 and by Nathaniel Myers a year later.<sup>8</sup> In 1876 one Hiram Raymond had a ranch in the vicinity of the Bald Hills on what was known as Long Prairie, six miles from the Klamath, on which he raised horses, cows, and mules.<sup>9</sup> From 1868 to 1883 stock was being raised by a T. Hopkins on Childs Hill Prairie. After 1884 William Childs ran stock there, while from 1912 on Albert and Kiah Tomlinson ranched Side Hill, Ford, and Shelton prairies.<sup>10</sup>

#### C. The Redwood Creek Basin Proves Conducive to Farming and Stock Raising

George Griffing and Robert Swan entered the Redwood Creek Valley wilderness in the early 1870s and settled down to perform beach mining and cattle raising operations, laying the foundations for the later prosperous lumber and dairy community of Orick at the mouth of Redwood Creek. In March 1919 Robert Swan sold his nine-acre ranch at Orick, known as the Tomlinson ranch (formerly rented and farmed by Arthur Tomlinson) to J.B. Blankenship.<sup>11</sup> Further up the water-course a copartnership existed between Messrs. W.J. McConnell, Isaac Minor, and John Saf by December 1870, centering around the stock, butchering, and market business. Their operation was possibly located 3/4 mile south of the ranch occupied earlier by John Ferrill.<sup>12</sup> On 10 January 1870 Alex and Eleanor McDowell sold their ranch on the east side of Redwood Creek, south of and adjacent to the McConnell ranch, to Allen Ramsey for \$1,000.<sup>13</sup> Notice was found

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid., 92:267, 293; 94:52.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., 92:168, 270.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., 92:437.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., 92:320.

<sup>10</sup>History Files, Redwood National Park Office, Arcata, Ca., courtesy of Steve Viers. In the early 1880s Childs was postmaster of Trinidad and also ran a general merchandising store. L.M. McKenney & Co., publ., McKenney's 8-County Directory of Sonoma, Napa, Lake, Mendocino, Humboldt, Yolo, Solano, and Marin Cos., 1884-5 (San Francisco: L.M. McKenney & Co., 1885), p. 118.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., 94:64, 69.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., 92:294, 353.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., 92:353.



that in 12 September 1874 one A. Norton sold to John Henry Hooker and possibly a J. Hetrick (Hickox?) land known as "Norton's North Fork Ranch" for \$1250. This probably refers to Almonzo Norton who had been a packer in the Placerville workings around the Shasta and Salmon River areas during 1854 to 1858, and who then bought land at Hoopa where he farmed for several years prior to the Civil War. In 1865 he sold out and went East, returning to the North Fork of Redwood Creek a few months later where he ran a stock business for about nine years before selling out and moving to Scottsville.

Located on unsurveyed government land on the north bank of the North Fork of Redwood Creek, the Norton property was bound on the west by a ranch of Joseph P. Garrett and B. Lack, and on the east bound by and including Pine Creek Ridge.<sup>14</sup> Hooker gradually added to his original purchases until he had amassed about 6,000 acres of grazing land on the Bald Hills at the time of his death in 1907. One mention of his operation, in 1895, said that he had recently sheared 3100 sheep averaging 7½ pounds per head. By 1897 Hooker was reported to be the largest sheepraiser in northern Humboldt County. In that year the Hookers divided up their 5,758-acre ranch in the Bald Hills among their children, the portions of township land affected being in Sec. 12, T8N, R2E, and in Sec. 32, T9N, R3E.<sup>15</sup>

The Garrett property noted as bounding Norton's North Fork Ranch on the west is probably that of Garrett & Co. located on the old Albee ranch. The owners were engaged in stock raising and farming, and in 1874 were said to be situated south of the Jonathan Lyons pre-emption claim.<sup>16</sup>

By 1872 Thomas Bair was trading in the goods he had acquired when the military garrison at Hoopa was disbanded and the store at Fort Gaston sold out. In 1882 he established a hotel and stage stop at the south end of Redwood Valley on land acquired from Isaac Minor for \$10,000. Minor had been active in the pack trade from Union to Orleans for seven years preceeding the Indian wars. His ranch on Redwood Creek, once stocked with as many as 500 head of cattle that furnished beef and dairy products to the mines, supplemented his store-keeping activities in Orleans. The place eventually had to be abandoned during the Indian uprisings and was supposedly burned by angry tribesman in February 1863. The main trail to Hoopa, heavily utilized by miners heading for the eastern goldfields and as a mail route, crossed via a bridge over Redwood Creek at this point. In early 1911 a fire hit Redwood Creek and according to a local newspaper an old public house on the Bair property built circa 1861 by Minor, along with all its contents, burned to the ground. Five months later it was reported that Bair was building a new resort on Redwood Creek to replace the old pioneer ranchhouse/hotel. This had to have

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 92:263, 308, 358.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 92:304, 306, 307.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 92:263.



been either a later house (post-1863) built by Minor or one erected in the early 1880s by Bair, since accounts of Indian depredations in the Redwood Creek area state very explicitly that by 1863 not a building was left from the head of Redwood Creek to its mouth.

Bair also invested in sheep, it being mentioned in September 1897 that he was ready to convert his stock ranch on Redwood Creek into a sheep operation. He had already purchased over 1,000 of the animals from J.H. Hooker. On 25 February 1899 he purchased the Nixon ranch on the Redwood, comprising 1,453 acres of grazing land, and with this plus the properties of Lord and Sherburn and Cummings greatly expanded his empire in the basin area. On 9 May 1900 the Jacob Beaver place on Redwood Creek burned, and instead of rebuilding, Beaver retired from the sheep business, selling his 1,200 acre-ranch and 500 head of sheep and some cattle to Bair, whose land he adjoined. On 19 July 1913 the manager of the Bair ranch on Redwood Creek arrived in Blue Lake with a band of over 100 mutton sheep being driven to Arcata to market. Another drive of 3,500 sheep from ranches on Redwood Creek and Mad River to southern Humboldt County markets was expected soon.<sup>17</sup>

Circa 1887 the Counts family was living on Christmas Prairie up Redwood Creek.<sup>18</sup> By October 1891 L. Hower owned a sheep ranch and stopping place in the Redwood Creek area, and four years later was mentioned as leasing land from Jacob Beaver for a period of 3-1/2 years from June 1894 on. In 1916 James P. Peterson of Arcata bought the Hower ranch on Redwood Creek just below that of Bairs.<sup>19</sup>

#### D. Towns Appear in the Bald Hills

The 1895-96 business directory of Humboldt County lists the town of Gans, a post office about sixty miles northeast of Eureka in the Bald Hills. Twelve persons lived in the area, whose principal industry was wool growing: Moses Brault, farmer; William Childs, Jr., farmer; David Cuddigy, laborer; Harry H. Delong, farmer; John Kane, miner; Anderson Lyons, rancher; Sherman Lyons, stockman; Andrew J. Maddy, farmer; Thomas McDonald, Jr., farmer; Henry Nielson, farmer; W.E. Stinehoff, stockraiser; and Cornelius Thompson, farmer. Mail was delivered here every Thursday over route 76 from Orick to Klamath via Gans.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Sally S. Salzman and Polly McW. Bickel, Archeological Survey in Rehabilitation Units in Redwood National Park, California (Arcata, Ca: National Park Service, 1979), p. 67; Fountain Papers, 92:282, 302, 352, 355, 356, and 115:307; Newspaper clippings (no town), 16 June 1911, 19 July 1913, in Humboldt County Pamphlets, Humboldt County Collection, Humboldt State University Library, Arcata, Ca.; Coy, Humboldt Bay Region, p. 71.

<sup>18</sup> Salzman and Bickel, Archeological Survey, p. 68.

<sup>19</sup> Fountain Papers, 92:281, 312-13.

<sup>20</sup> Ed. B. Spencer, publ., Business Directory of Humboldt County, 1895-6. A Complete Register of the Citizens of Eureka and Humboldt County, California . . . (Eureka, Ca.: Standard Print., [1895]), p. 100.



Other Bald Hills residents included John Preston, who in 1904 purchased 160 acres of land belonging to Robert King and situated near the Hooker ranch.<sup>21</sup> By this year also Arthur A. Tomlinson owned a homestead claim further north on Gans Prairie in Sec. 6, T10N, R2E.<sup>22</sup> Sixteen voters were now listed in the Bald Hills precinct: John M. Brown; John Grinnell Chapman, Jr.; George Ford; Albert A. Frazier; Edward Griffiths; James Lee; Antonio and Jonathan Lyons; William Lyons; Peter Masten; Alfred Melvin; Charles Simms; Cornelius Thompson; James Yates; Albert York; and Eugene Young.<sup>23</sup>

Another resident of the Bald Hills who had formerly spent several years at Hoopa was Byron F. McCombs, who retired in 1950 after 23 years of sheep and cattle raising. In the early 1920s the McCombs had spent several years at Hoopa where he was with the U.S. Indian Service and she taught school. Upon retirement they sold their ranch, formerly the Sherman Lyons place near Elk Camp, to J.L. McNeil of Ukiah.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>Fountain Papers, 92:307.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., 92:485.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., 92:277.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., 92:327.



## IX. The Lyons Family

### A. Jonathan Lyons Arrives in California

Jonathan Lyons, a native of Indiana, was born 1 November 1832, later moving with his family to Iowa. Afflicted with asthma as a boy and taking a doctor's advice to move to California, he organized a party of emigrants who journeyed by ox team across the Great Plains, arriving at the Willamette Valley in the fall. Lyons tarried first at the struggling village of Albany, but the next year succumbed to gold fever and proceeded to the Salmon River country in Siskiyou County. Here he engaged in freighting and butchering activities in addition to mining. The butchering business necessitated that he visit the various mining camps on muleback with carcasses of beef slung on each side of his mount--a welcome sight to men starved for the taste of fresh meat.<sup>1</sup>

Lyons's abilities in the field of agriculture are attested to by a letter from someone near the Forks of Salmon to the editor of a local paper in March 1856 stating that Lyons had there commenced farming in earnest. His was the first garden ever cultivated successfully on the Salmon, causing the author of the letter to speculate that "the reign of 'flap-jacks' & fat pork is about at an end and the citizens in the vicinity after this, can boast as good 'grub' as any place in the mines."<sup>2</sup> Having served as a soldier in the garrison of Fort Gaston at Hoopa, in 1858 Lyons took up a homestead in Hoopa Valley and farmed successfully for several years until the government purchased his holdings and that of others in order to form the Hoopa Indian reservation. In 1862 he married an Indian woman of the valley and settled on Redwood Creek on land later known as the Hooker ranch, investing in horses. Losing heavily in this endeavor he switched to cattle raising, but fared little better. A change of location was decided on, so in 1865 Lyons moved further down Redwood Creek to a pre-emption claim near Fluffmans Point on a ridge between Schoolhouse Peak and Redwood Creek. Here he concentrated his efforts on the sheep business, meeting with great success.<sup>3</sup> An 1876 assessment on his 160-acre ranch valued his improvements and livestock, including 3 horses, 6 cows, 130 stock cattle, 900 sheep, 5 mules, and 10 hogs, at from \$100 to \$400.<sup>4</sup> By the 1880s Jonathan Lyons had large property holdings in the Bald Hills on which he raised horses, calves, stock cattle, beef cattle, sheep, mules, oxen, and hogs.

Several children were born to Jonathan and his wife: Anderson, Sherman, Antonio, and William Lyons were the surviving sons, along with one daughter, Mrs. Josephine Arford. One son, Julius, died as a teenager and was buried on the Lyons homestead. Another son Harvey is said to have died of TB as a child. Due to failing eyesight, around 1907 or 1909 Jonathan went to live with his daughter at Blocksburg, turning over the ranch management to his sons. The old home ranch was leased to his son William. Lyons died on 11 September 1913, at the age of eighty-one, leaving an estate valued at \$10,000.<sup>5</sup>

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Fountain Papers, 92:332.

Ibid., 92:343.

Ibid. 92:332.

Ibid., 92:278.

Ibid., 92:325; Salzman and Bickel, Archeological Survey, pp. 65-66; Fountain Papers, 92:332.



## B. A Successful Sheep Operation is Plagued by Several Fires

A newspaper clipping of 23 July 1892 mentions that Jonathan Lyons and his sons Anderson and Sherman had reached Eureka from their large ranch in the Bald Hills section with a band of 1500 mutton sheep which they were shipping to San Francisco. Part were driven down by the inland route and part along the coast, the latter arriving at the county seat in good time, even though they had partaken of some type of noxious weed enroute that killed about six of the finest. The article concluded by stating that the best mutton sheep in the county came from northern Humboldt.<sup>6</sup>

The post office of Elder was first established at the Lyons ranch, then later moved to the Tomlinson property. It was still at the former location in 1907. In the summer of 1897 fire completely destroyed the residence and few adjoining outbuildings of Jonathan Lyons at Elder. A fire that started from the kitchen stove spread quickly despite efforts to quench it, although the fixtures and books of the post office were saved. Insurance coverage on the property was slight. Undaunted, Lyons proceeded to have the house and barn rebuilt, Louis Anderson of Blue Lake serving as head carpenter. Fifteen thousand feet of lumber were hauled from Mr. Minor's yard at Dow's Prairie and the work was pushed rapidly to completion. In November the neighbors all gathered for a grand dance given at the new residence, with six turkeys furnishing the dinner.<sup>7</sup>

Lyons's prominence as a sheep rancher is attested to by the fact that in 1900 his wool received the much-coveted gold medal at the Exposition Universelle de Paris, his ranch soon becoming famous for having produced "the finest grade of wool in the known world." In 1905 Lyons was noted as one of the few men still living on land pre-empted in 1865.<sup>8</sup>

Misfortune again befell Lyons when on 20 April 1911 his home, formerly housing the post office, plus all its contents, were entirely destroyed by fire. This was the same structure built fourteen years ago with lumber from the Glendale mill and which had been acclaimed as one of the finest buildings in the Bald Hills country.<sup>9</sup>

## C. The Lyons Family Extends its Holdings in the Bald Hills

As the sons of Jonathan Lyons grew up and married, they acquired their own ranches in the Bald Hills country, so that by the early 1900s the Lyons family were the dominant homesteaders of the region. By 1895 A. (Anderson?) R. Lyons had erected a fine new house at his ranch on the old Peter's place.<sup>10</sup> This would probably be in the vicinity of Elk Camp where Henry and Martin Peters had established their homestead in the 1860s. In February 1905 Antonio M. Lyons was

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<sup>6</sup> Fountain Papers, 92:332.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 92:341, 343.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 92:328, 332, 339.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 92:345.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 92:272.



living in a new house built on the old Cagle place on Cagle Ridge. Antonio and his wife, who was born in Orleans, were married in 1892 and lived on their large sheep ranch in the Bald Hills until 1927 when he retired, one of the leading stockmen in the county, and moved to Arcata, transferring management of the ranch to his only son Eugene, who continued operating the holdings and participating in activities of fellow sheep growers within the county and state.<sup>11</sup>

Sherman Lyons built a large home in the vicinity of Elk Camp and ran sheep over his holdings in the Bald Hills for many years, retiring from active ranching circa 1914 and moving to Blue Lake and then Arcata. This home was a stage-coach stopping place when the horsedrawn coach traveled from Arcata and Trinidad over the Bald Hills wagon road to Orleans and the Trinity mines. Two years after Sherman's death in San Francisco in 1941, his home in the Bald Hills was purchased jointly by Fred Graham and Byron McCombs, and thereafter referred to as the "G.M.C. Ranch." Graham had been overseer of the Russ cattle ranges on Murphy Ridge and Redwood Creek for several years. By 1946 McCombs was sole owner of the 2600-acre ranch. On moving to Arcata in 1950, he sold the place to the H.L. ("Red") McNeil family of Ukiah who were living in the large two-story home on the property four years later when it was destroyed by fire, leaving only the large brick fireplace standing. The property was still an active operation, sheepshearing being carried on the ranch at the time of the blaze.<sup>12</sup>

#### D. Death Claims Prominent Humboldt County Pioneers

A year after Jonathan Lyons's death at his son Antonio's residence in Blue Lake in 1913, his son Anderson, a prominent farmer of the Blocksburg section, died and was buried beside his father in Blue Lake. William Lyons died in San Francisco in 1954, and the last son, Antonio, succumbed a year later.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 92:326, 330.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 92: 324, 327, 342, 344.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 92:328, 332.



## X. Roads and Trails

### A. Wagon Roads Replace Old Trails

By the early 1870s agitation had begun to build roads extending out into the Bald Hills and Redwood Creek area and on into Hoopa Valley in order to provide better communication between these regions and the Humboldt Bay communities. In an attempt to improve the situation, Klamath County supervisors in 1872 began work to convert the old Klamath trail over the Bald Hills into a new and better wagon road that would shorten the distance between Trinidad and the Bald Hills. By 1906 U.S. mail was being carried into the Bald Hills over a packtrail and mail route that had been established from Blue Lake to Elder. It left the former town via Liscom Hill, crossing the south fork of the Mad River, and then over Redwood Creek at the Beaver ranch site, and finally following the present Stover ranch road toward Schoolhouse Peak. An alternate route between Elder and Arcata was via Thomas Bair's place.<sup>1</sup>

After completion of a wagon road connecting the Bair ranch on Redwood Creek with that of J.H. Hooker in 1917, people of the Bald Hills voiced their opinion that the remaining four miles necessary to connect this route with the "Lyons Brothers" ranch on the Bald Hills should be built also, arguing that "this piece of road when finished will give a direct outlet to the people of the Bald Hills, Martin's Ferry, Weitchpec & Orleans sections of the Klamath River to the coast at Arcata or Eureka, & will save them a distance of about 25 miles." This extension was not completed, however, until the Stovers built an access road to the upper sections of their property.<sup>2</sup>

### B. The Crescent City to Orleans Stage Route

The new Orick Inn built in 1922 along the county road functioned as a stage stop for the Crescent City to Orleans run via the Bald Hills.<sup>3</sup> A 1921 road map of Humboldt County advertised a stage route running from Orick northeast to Orleans:

From Orick to Martin's Ferry, Weitchpec and Orleans:--N.E. 1/2 M. cross Redwood Creek bridge, along river 1 M. to forks of road, taking right fork, ascending mountain thru redwood and pine forest. Heavy climb for 9 M. to prairie and 4 M. to Tomlinson's ranch and stage headquarters, 2,600 ft. elevation. Good Meals.

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<sup>1</sup> Humboldt Times, 16 July 1870, in Coy, Humboldt Bay Region, p. 281; Fountain Papers, 92:308; Salzman and Bickel, Archeological Survey, p. 67; Fountain Papers, 92:277.

<sup>2</sup> Fountain Papers, 92:275; Salzman and Bickel, Archeological Survey, p. 67.

<sup>3</sup> Thelma Hufford, "The Orick Inn . . . Home-Cooked Meals and White Table Cloths," in Humboldt Historian (Eureka, Ca.: Humboldt County Historical Society, May-June 1976).



From Tomlinsons, road crosses the Bald Hills thru grazing land for 5 M. to French Camp and 3,200 feet elevation, then descending thru forest 5 miles to Klamath River and Martin's Ferry. From here road runs north and east along the river over good road to Orleans, end of wagon road. Good trail from Orleans to Happy Camp, then wagon road to Hornbrook on State Highway to Sacramento.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Federated Commercial Bodies of Humboldt County, comp., "Hand Guide and Road Map of Humboldt County" (Eureka, Ca.: Lambert & McKeegan, c. 1921), p. 26.



## XI. Lumber Industry

### A. Development Around Humboldt Bay

The lumber industry began almost immediately upon the arrival of whites in the Humboldt Bay region, the lumberman following quickly in the wake of the goldhunter, drawn by the enormous reserves of timber he saw in the area and attracted by their money-making potential. The first companies were small, one-man affairs confined to the fir, pine, and spruce stands near the coast with whose attributes and characteristics men were already familiar. The concentration of the industry into a few hands was gradual, but stimulated by isolation of the industry from the marketplace and by early severe losses in sales during the Civil War. The great size and weight of the redwoods made it impossible to handle and saw them at first; this situation plus ignorance of their many good qualities delayed their harvesting for awhile. Much credit for the success of Humboldt County in the lumber field is due to the bay itself, which, because of its deep channel, is the best shipping point along the entire redwood belt.<sup>1</sup>

### B. Redwood Gains in Popularity

Though the manufacture of lumber began in Humboldt County in 1850, not until ten years later did the first full commercial cargo of all-redwood lumber leave Humboldt Bay. By this time the coast redwood's unusual qualities had been assessed and it became highly prized for lumber because of its light weight and resistance to shrinkage, warping, rot, and fire. In this industry northern California had no competition, for no other state possessed these magnificent trees of which Humboldt and Del Norte counties grew the best stands. New mechanical means for cutting trees that were introduced from the 1860s through the 1890s (circular saw, band saw, logging railways, steam donkey, bull donkey) resulted in the production of such vast amounts of lumber that soon neither local outlets nor San Francisco could meet the demand of the output. The lumber companies decided therefore to pool their resources and foster trade development with the east coast and abroad.<sup>2</sup>

### C. Lumbering Along Redwood Creek

In 1881 the amount of available redwood lands along Redwood Creek was estimated at about 100,000 acres. The lumber industry did not begin here, however, until after World War II, when companies began purchasing portions of the redwood and fir forest along the watercourse. A rapid expansion of the

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<sup>1</sup>Irvine, History of Humboldt County, pp. 109, 111; Humboldt County Historical Society News Letter 7, no. 3 (May 1959); Elliott, History of Humboldt County (1881), p. 142; Hyman Palais and Earl Roberts, "The History of the Lumber Industry in Humboldt County," Pacific Historical Review 19, no. 1 (February 1950): 1, 3, 6.

<sup>2</sup>Elliott, History of Humboldt County (1881), n.p.; Irvine, History of Humboldt County, pp. 109, 111; Palais and Roberts, "History of the Lumber Industry in Humboldt County," p. 3.



industry occurred in the 1940s and 1950s as highly-trained loggers, mill workers, truckers, and shippers moved into the area. This new era of lumbering utilized power saws and bulldozers that rapidly felled the giant trees, which were then quickly carried by large trucks over the Bald Hills road to the coast. Ancillary roads were broken through the forest down to the streambed where lumber mills were established in the flats.

Over the next twenty or so years before the land was acquired by the National Park Service for inclusion in Redwood National Park, the forest and nurturing soil base were critically affected by the lumbering operations that precipitated later severe erosional activity. By the mid-1960s the supply of large virgin timber stands in the region had been virtually eliminated, and although companies continued small-scale operations in the drainage, most of the mills were shut down. By the time the federal government purchased the land in 1978, almost all of the forests along Redwood Creek had been harvested.

Under National Park Service ownership, no logging is allowed within the park boundaries, although logging trucks still pass along the Bald Hills road hauling timber from reserves south and southeast of the park. Here Simpson Logging, Arcata Redwood, and Louisiana Pacific continue logging and mill operations.<sup>3</sup>

#### D. Effects of Logging Operations on Ranching Activities in the Bald Hills

For the ranchers in the Bald Hills, the consequences of the logging industry were especially detrimental. Although some of the early ranchers continued to hold on to their large ranges, the prosperous sheepraising days of the Bald Hills were over. Erosion and flooding became serious problems, while coyote activity increased and began to seriously interfere with livestock profits. Prior to the 1940s there had been 15,000 to 20,000 sheep in the Redwood Valley, and sheepraising had provided a reliable source of income both for white owners in the area and also for local Indians, who traveled from ranch to ranch during the shearing season offering their services. After the 1940s lumber seemed to offer the only employment in the area. Today cattle still graze in the Bald Hills, but this will be phased out as pasture leases expire and management plans for the national park are implemented.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Elliott, History of Humboldt County (1881), p. 142; Salzman and Bickel, Archeological Survey, pp. 69-70; Bearss, Basic Data, Redwood National Park, p. 176.

<sup>4</sup> Salzman and Bickel, Archeological Survey, pp. 68-70.



## XII. Historical Resources of the Bald Hills

### A. Importance of Early Pioneer History

Lumbering activity in the Redwood Creek drainage has been a prime factor in the loss of several aboriginal sites and possible early homestead claims. Their very existence gives those few remaining cultural resources in the Redwood Creek area, many of whose past history can be at least partially reconstructed or documented, an added dimension of importance. Despite the fact that the main emphasis of Redwood National Park is to preserve, protect, and interpret significant examples of the coastal redwood forests, the National Park Service, under various mandates concerning historic preservation, has a responsibility in all its parks to locate, identify, evaluate, and preserve if required, the historic resources entrusted to its care. This obligation to the land and to its people includes providing for the understanding, appreciation, and enjoyment of these resources through appropriate programs of research and interpretation.

Human utilization of the Redwood Creek Valley and Bald Hills region has continued from prehistoric through modern times. For the earliest settlers life was a constant struggle against such oppressing factors as isolation and Indian harrassment; for later ranchers and sheepraisers it turned into a losing battle against the adverse effects and continuing encroachment of the lumber industry. Despite these obstacles, farmers and ranchers in the Redwood Creek Valley and Bald Hills succeeded in developing over the years large-scale sheepraising operations that became famous in northern California for the excellence of their wool and high quality of their mutton.

Little physical evidence of the early pioneer days remains within the New Lands of Redwood National Park, but memories of certain individuals linger through the names bestowed on local creeks, prairies, and mountains. Archival information is often scanty, throwing heavy reliance in some instances on first-hand accounts to bolster the data base. Redwood National Park is especially fortunate in that several families, some still residing on or near the Bald Hills, remember the people and events of the 1860s. The opportunities offered in the area for the inauguration of an oral history program centering around early pioneering and ranching activities in the Bald Hills and Redwood Creek Valley should be pursued immediately and intensively by the park interpretive staff before the sources of the information are gone. In addition to an ongoing program of collecting written and oral data on the area, efforts should be made to preserve some of those physical remains still extant that are related to different types of land use in the area through the years. It is unfortunate that already several early structures associated with early pioneering activity have been destroyed or allowed to deteriorate.

Any reluctance felt by the park in regard to preserving existing historical resources may be the result of park planning that addresses the scenic and natural assets of the area. A major problem in trying to exhibit historically-significant sites or even conceive a thematic presentation of continuing history of settlement and land use in the area is that the park will not contain a central museum center, but instead intends to provide interpretation on-site



throughout the park, which forces consideration of safety and energy problems involved in encouraging visitation to individual historic sites. The problem is compounded by the fact that initial park planning did not include the expansion area, so that the future of historical resources there is not treated in the General Management Plan.

## B. Results of Site Surveys

Only two of the historical sites within the New Lands of Redwood National Park are considered eligible for inclusion on the National Register, and their preservation is strongly recommended. Other sites investigated either by the writer; by Laura Soullière, an architectural historian from the Denver Service Center who spent several months surveying cultural resources within Redwood National Park; or by contract archeologists Polly Bickel and Sally Salzman, are listed below. Several of them are recommended for preservation and adaptive use if possible.

### 1. Dolason Barn

This structure, considered to date from the late 19th century or early 20th, is located about one mile south of the intersection of the Bald Hills and K & K lumber road on a sloping benchland about halfway down Dolason Prairie from the crest of the ridge. According to Doug Lane, a local rancher, the barn was probably connected with the sheepraising activities of Sherman Lyons near Elk Camp.<sup>1</sup> It was evaluated for architectural significance by Soullière in 1978. Despite the evidence of recent, probably 20th century, alterations, such as the corrugated sheet metal added to part of the roof and to the exterior south wall, she felt it was nevertheless "a fine example of a diminishing category of hand-built architecture," and recommended adaptive use, if possible, a suggestion with which this writer concurs.<sup>2</sup> It is reported that other barns of this vintage in the area have been destroyed over the years and it is therefore felt that this particular item is worthy of preservation.

In the vicinity of the structure is an old log bridge, which, due to constant flooding by water and to general disuse, supports a growth of vegetation. Because it is not aesthetically unpleasing or objectionable from a safety standpoint, it is recommended that it be left to benign neglect. A second item, a sheep shed lean-to constructed with a framework of whole logs covered by a corrugated metal roof, located on the hillside above the barn, is of no historical significance but is of interest in demonstrating the meager amount of protection adequate for livestock in the even climate of the Bald Hills. Evidence of aboriginal occupation has been found in this area, and any action to remove or alter the existing structure should be reviewed by the park archeologist.<sup>3</sup> Another barn standing just north of the

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1. CA-HUM-438H, Archaeological Site Inventory Record (ASIR), in Bickel, Study of Cultural Resources in Redwood National Park.

2. Part IV, "New Lands at Redwood Creek," Sect. B., in Laura E. Soullière, Architectural Survey and Evaluation, Redwood National Park, California (Crescent City, Ca.: Redwood National Park, 1978).

3. See CA-HUM-439, ASIR, in Bickel, Study of Cultural Resources in Redwood National Park.



K & K and Bald Hills Road intersection was not visited by this writer, but is also thought to be associated with Sherman Lyons's residence at Elk Camp.

## 2. Tomlinson Barn Ruins

Lumber from the structure is located on Childs Hill Prairie on the flat below a private road which branches west from the Bald Hills Road across from the driveway to the old Tomlinson stage stop. Although now collapsed and partially burned, the single-story structure displays hand-hewn, -split, and -sawn structural timbers that show broad-axe marks. Split shingles were used on the roof. Nineteenth-century construction techniques are evident, so the barn might have been associated with the old stage stop on the ridge above, since the grade of an old road to the station runs nearby. The collapsed building obviously lacks the structural integrity necessary for nomination to the National Register and could not easily be restored, but even in its present state might possess pertinent data on early 19th- and 20th-century construction techniques. It should be determined if more pictures or drawings of the site are needed, although the contract archeologists have accomplished some work along this line in addition to gathering measurements.<sup>4</sup>

## 3. Garret Barn, South Barn, "Ingomar Club"

Soullièrre examined the Garret barn, below the K & K road, which is of wood frame construction covered with corrugated metal. Of late vintage, the barn was reportedly built in 1962. The South barn was similar in form to the Garret barn, and built during the same time period, circa 1964. It is located on Menays Road, connecting the K & K and Bald Hills routes. The "Ingomar Club," a small wood frame structure on the K & K Road, was erected by the Simpson Lumber Company, probably in the 1960s, to serve as a field office. None of these structures is historically significant.<sup>5</sup>

## 4. Lane Property

The structures on this property in the vicinity of Elk Camp mostly date from the 1960s. The leasehold comprises the old Sherman Lyons property, the house being the one rebuilt by "Red" McNeil after the original Lyons house burned in the 1950s. Other outbuildings (garages, barn) date from the 1970s. Also on the property is another older barn which the current owners believe dates from the late 1800s and was associated with an old house once situated lower on the hillside. Soullièrre felt the hand-hewn construction of the building possessed architectural significance and suggested preservation.<sup>6</sup> The writer endorses this recommendation since the barn was probably associated with some of the early (1860s) homesteads near Elk Camp mentioned in an earlier section of this report.

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4. CA-HUM-445H, ASIR, in Bickel, ibid.

5. IV E, F, and G, in Soullièrre, Architectural Survey.

6. IV I, in Soullièrre, Architectural Survey.



## 5. Well

During the course of their survey work, the archeologists discovered a hand-dug well lined with uncut local rock daubed with mud mortar across from the old Tomlinson property on the south side of the Bald Hills Road and south of a small pond. The structure was covered with a top of wooden planks. It was either associated with the stage stop<sup>7</sup> or early ranching activities in the area. The structure should be preserved.

## 6. Shelter

Also found by the archeologists, south of Hidden Prairie and down near Redwood Creek, was a lean-to shelter constructed of cut planks and beams placed vertically in a hollow, burned-out redwood tree. After determination that it was probably unconnected with aboriginal inhabitants, its use by a "timber cruiser" (one who evaluates lumber resources) was suggested by local informants.<sup>8</sup>

## 7. Jonathan Lyons Homestead

This homestead claim is located southwest of Schoolhouse Peak at the end of a seldom-used dirt road that branches off the Bald Hills Road immediately before it passes to the southeast and outside of the park boundary. It is necessary to go through two locked gates before arriving at the homestead site, which is at about 2120 feet in elevation about three-fourths of the way down the slope between Schoolhouse Peak and Redwood Creek.

Remains on site consist of a large barn, a few small outbuildings, a corral complex, a recent house, a sheep shearers' bunkhouse, and a fruit and nut orchard containing some twenty trees of apple, plum, pear, quince, almond, and English and black walnut, planted in two or three rows. Beyond the orchard is a graveplot in the woods, surrounded by an iron ornamental fence with wooden posts and supports. The marble slab, which has been partially obscured by an uprooted tree trunk, marks the grave of Julius Lyons, born 1878 and died sometime in the 1890s. Also behind the orchard is a dump on which purple glass fragments and pieces of china have been found. Miscellaneous pieces of old farm equipment (spring harrow, plow, mower, hay loader pulley with patent date of 1886) and evidence of prehistoric activity are also present.

The barn contains major structural timbers of hand-hewn redwood, but has been altered in recent years and used for hay storage. The house was constructed during the 1960s to replace an earlier ranchhouse that burned down. Although relatively new, it should be preserved as part of the continuing history of the site and adaptive uses found for it. Architect Soullière felt the bunkhouse was the only building left that displayed any structural integrity. According to local informants it was originally a woodshed to which an extension was added, enabling

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7. CA-HUM-449H, ASIR, in Bickel, Study of Cultural Resources in Redwood National Park.

8. 4-HUM-347, ASIR, in ibid.



it to house itinerant sheep shearers during the shearing season. Locals think it was constructed prior to 1900 and has not been altered since that time. It has been included on the List of Classified Structures.<sup>9</sup>

Nomination of the Jonathan Lyons homestead site to the National Register will be based on the following areas of significance:

a) It exhibits evidence of prehistoric and historic occupational levels, imbuing it with archeological significance based on research potential regarding regional settlement patterns and land use over the years;

b) It is a documented pre-emption claim of 1865 inhabited continually by members of the same family into modern times. The Lyonses were prominent sheepraisers of northern California and raised prize-winning wool on this land at the turn of the century, contributing to the farm's importance in the fields of agriculture and stock raising;

c) It was a typical homestead of the Bald Hills region, displaying the usual course of development for such ranches. Land use began with mule raising and rudimentary forms of agriculture, later evolving into sheep raising and horticulture. The spot also served as a post office for the region and is shown on early maps as the settlement of Elder;

d) Examples of early small ranches are fast disappearing, a common victim of absorption into larger spreads, of obliteration in the face of industrial expansion, or of decay due to simple neglect. When a type specimen possessing as much historical integrity and as well-documented a past as the Lyons ranch is found within a park, it should be preserved as part of the area's cultural heritage. The history of the people and events in the Bald Hills and Redwood Creek basin and valley was a direct result of pioneering and commercial activities that began around Humboldt Bay in the 1850s in response to needs generated by the mining regions of the Trinity and Salmon rivers, and that later spread to the interior. The significance of the Lyons ranch, then, goes far beyond park boundaries, for it is part of the broader general pioneering movement in northern California.

#### 8. Trinidad Trail

The history of this trail leading from the port of Trinidad to the mining regions on the Trinity, Klamath, and Salmon rivers has been covered in an earlier section of this report. The route's contribution to the development of northern Humboldt County is significant and justifies its nomination to the National Register. During the early 1850s the trail became

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9. See IV C, in Soulli re, Architectural Survey; and CA-HUM-481H, ASIR, in Salzman and Bickel, Archaeological Survey.



the main commercial link between the remote mining regions, the interior towns and ranches, and the western seaports. Without the steady stream of supplies it afforded, mining activities would have been forced to cease or at least have been severely curtailed, while many smaller farms and settlements along the route would have been deprived of necessary equipment and provisions.

Only portions of the original "Tall Trees" segment of the Trinidad Trail are observable today paralleling the present Tall Trees Grove path that begins on the east side of Redwood Creek and runs to the northeast, intersecting the Bald Hills Road north of Elk Camp. This stretch of trail, which was closed circa 1900 upon construction of a wagon road into the Bald Hills, was reopened in the 1960s by the Arcata Redwood Company to enable public visitation of the Grove of the Giants and the Howard Libbey Tree, world's tallest. The present Tall Trees section of trail generally follows the historic route, though differing in several instances, such as its point of origin on the Bald Hills highway. Most of the present trail follows an old logging road. Between the Grove and the start of logging activity on the Bald Hills slopes, however, is an unvegetated 1/2-mile stretch where the ruts of the old switchback trail are visible. Portions of the trail reportedly can also be seen near the headwaters of Emerald Creek further upstream from the Tall Trees Grove.



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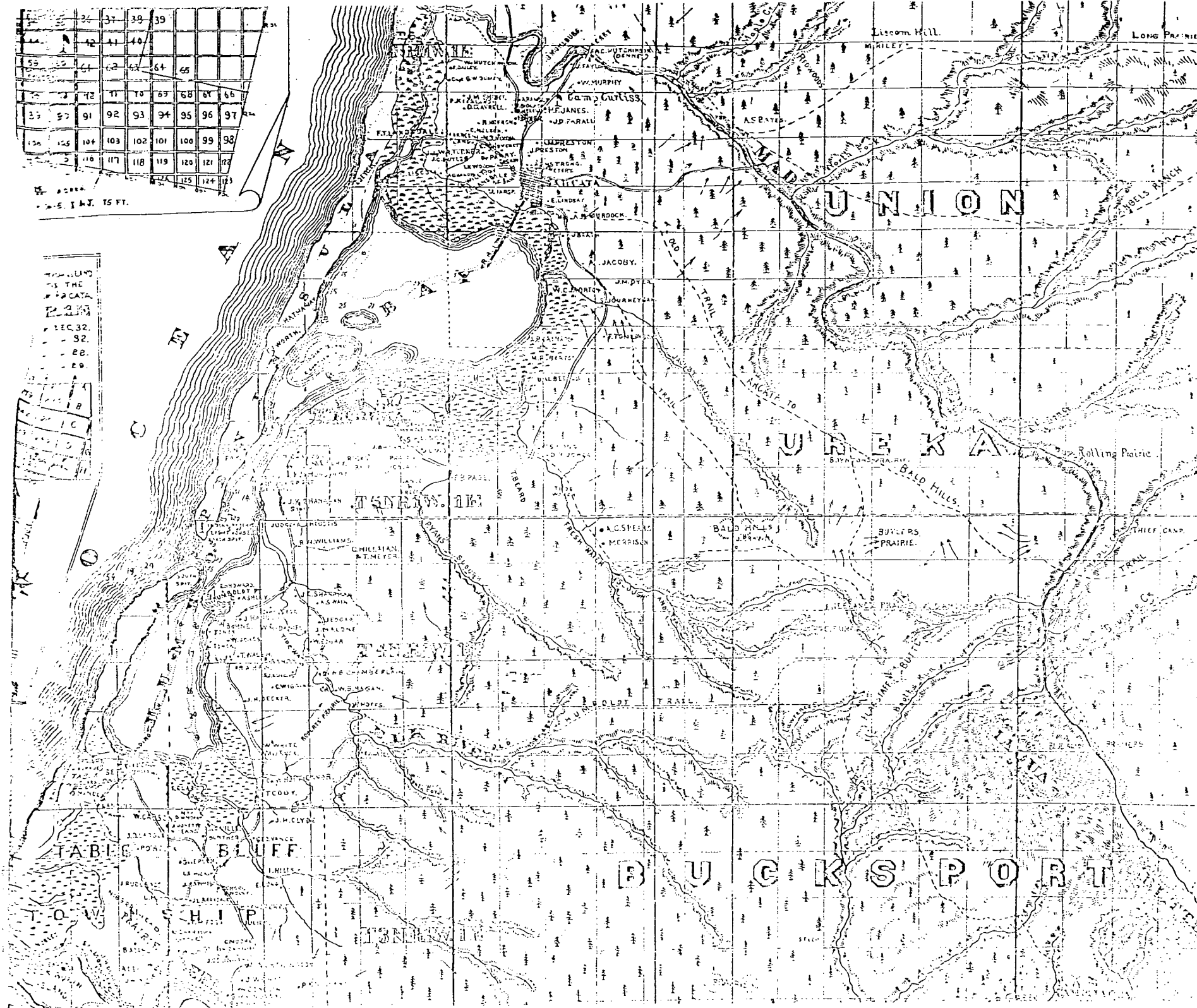
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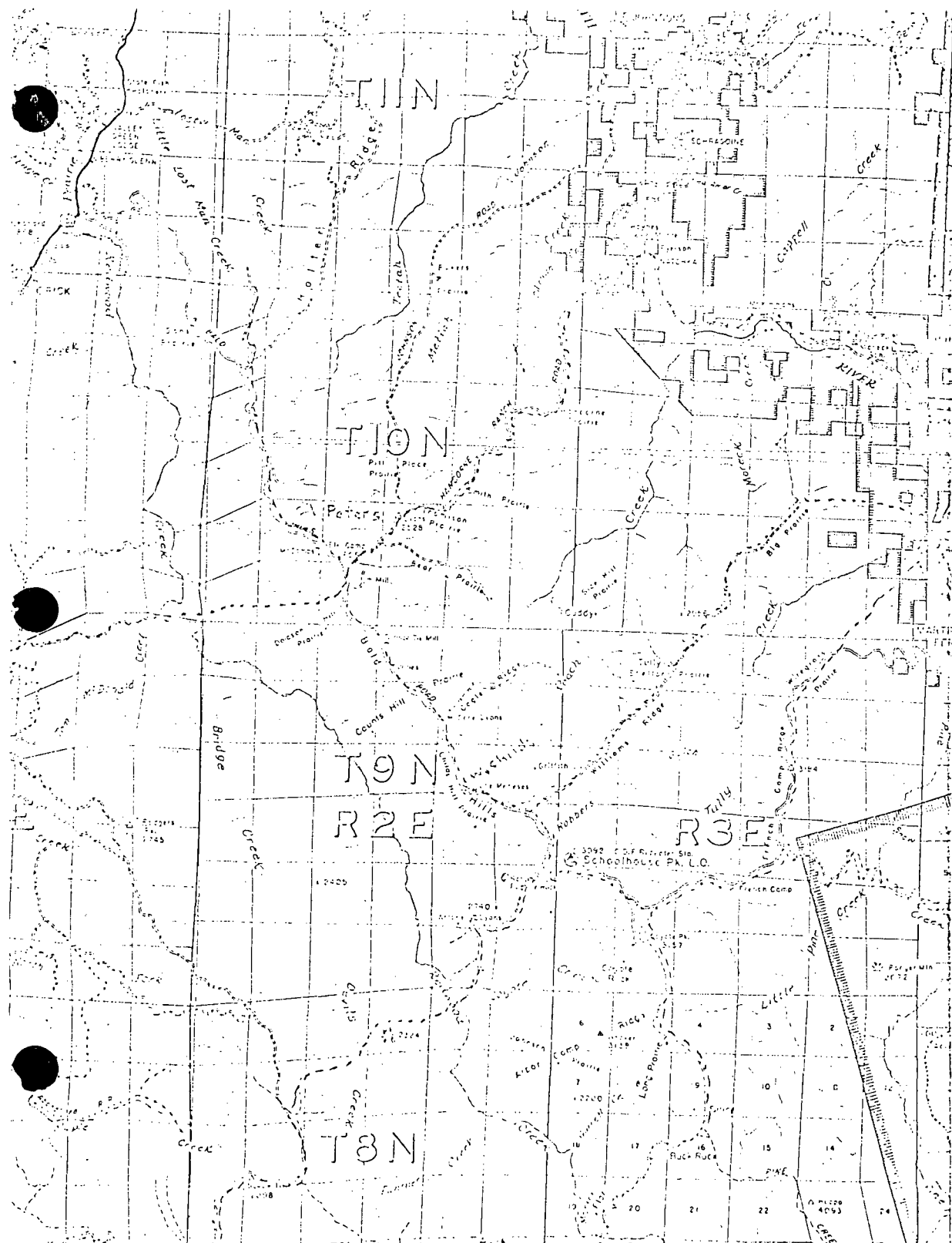
U. Williams, J. Smith, S. Farmer, S. L. Shaw, Esq., who named Ferdinand Ranch and P. O.

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The intelligence and politeness of very many citizens throughout the County.

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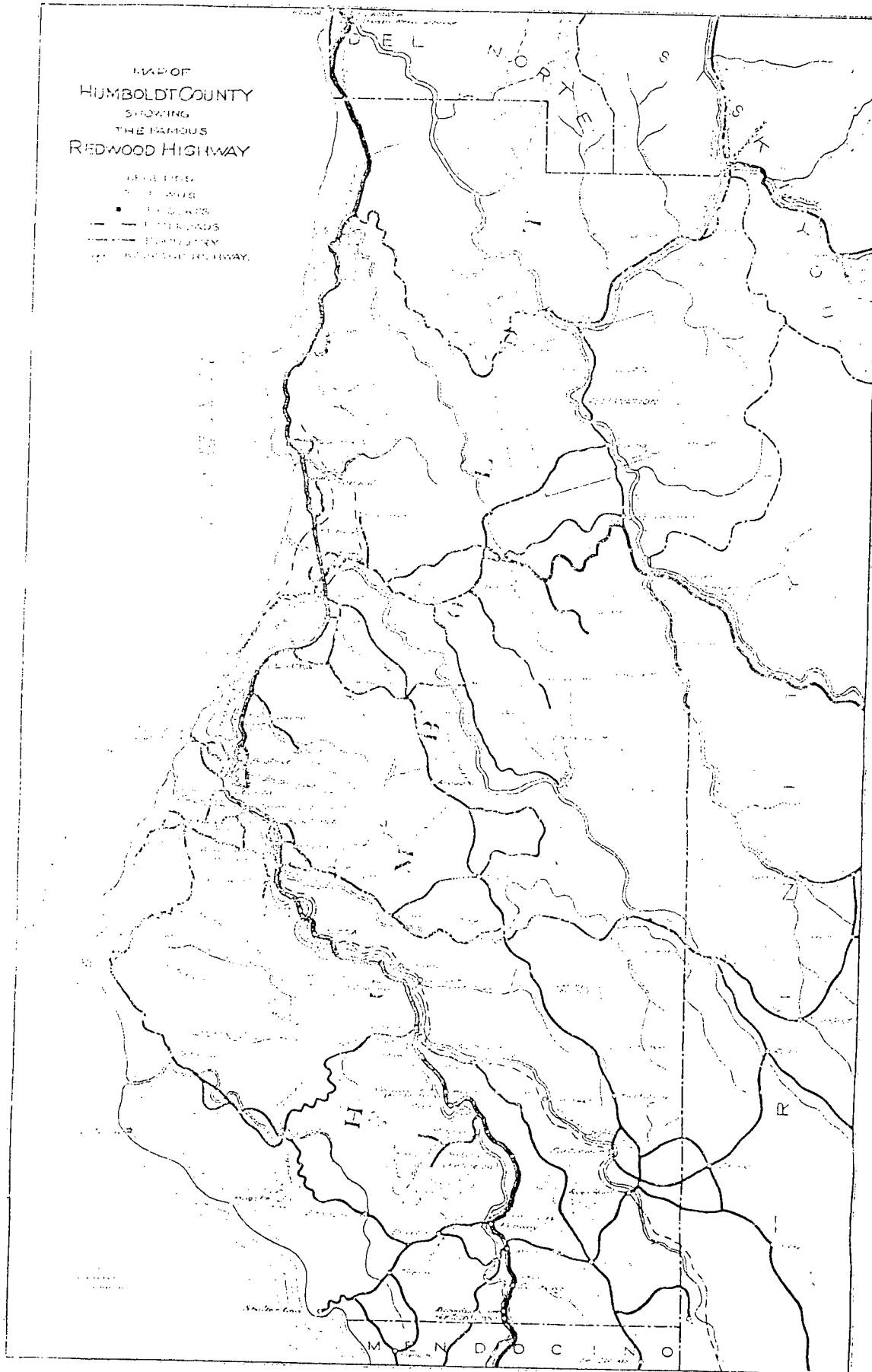






MAP OF  
HUMBOLDT COUNTY  
SHOWING  
THE FAMOUS  
REDWOOD HIGHWAY

GENERAL  
SCALE  
LEGEND  
— RAILROADS  
— HIGHWAYS  
— CITIES  
— RIVERS AND STREAMS  
— COASTLINE

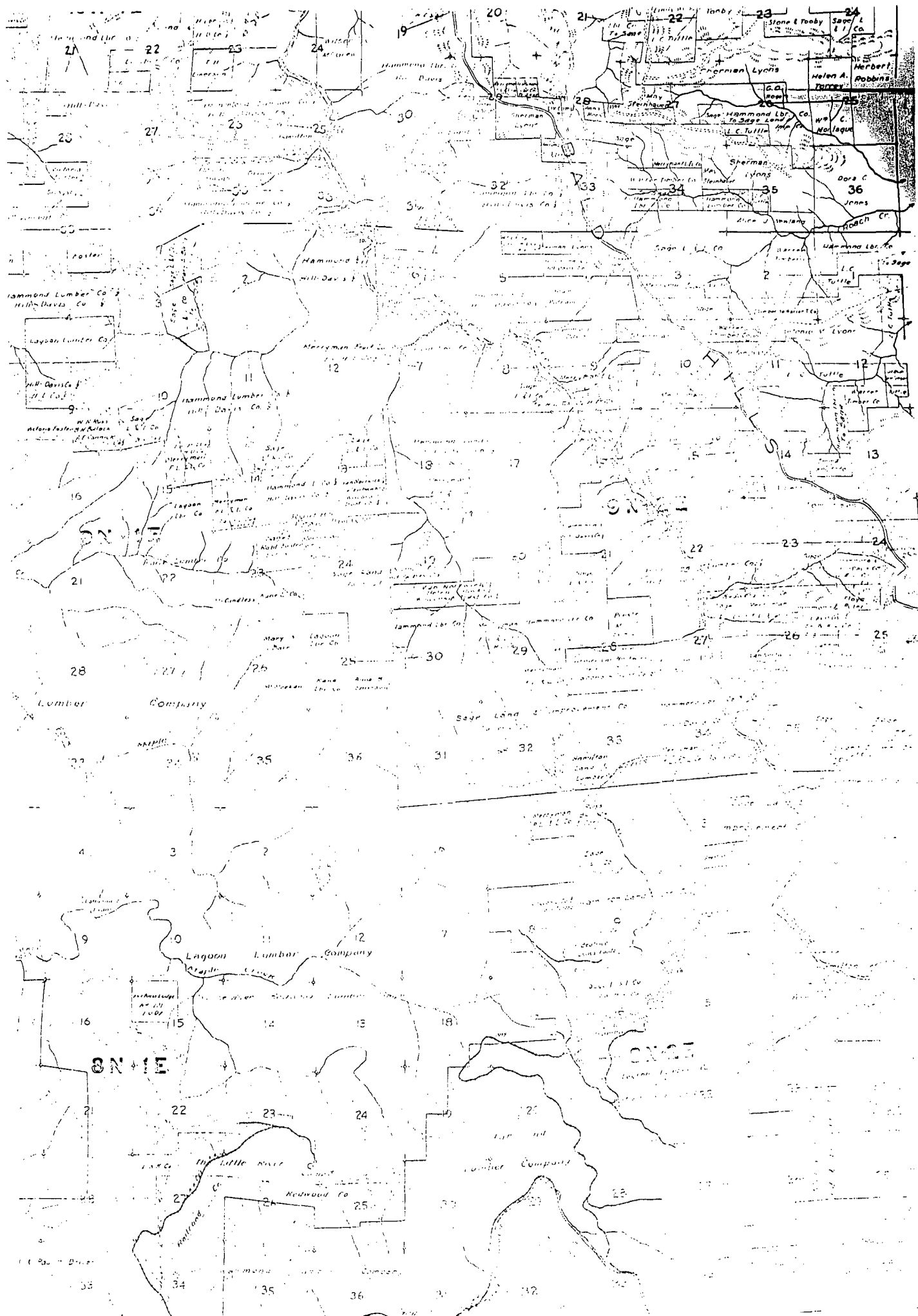


EUREKA TO HORN BROOK	via Willow Creek	Between Stations	Eureka To	Hornbrook To
EUREKA		0.0	0.0	210.5
Arleta		7.7	7.7	202.8
Blue Lake		7.8	15.5	195.0
Willow Creek		35.4	50.9	159.6
Hoop		10.8	61.7	148.8
Willow Creek		12.3	74.0	136.5
H. H. Creek		6.3	80.3	130.2
Orleans		0.0	80.3	130.2

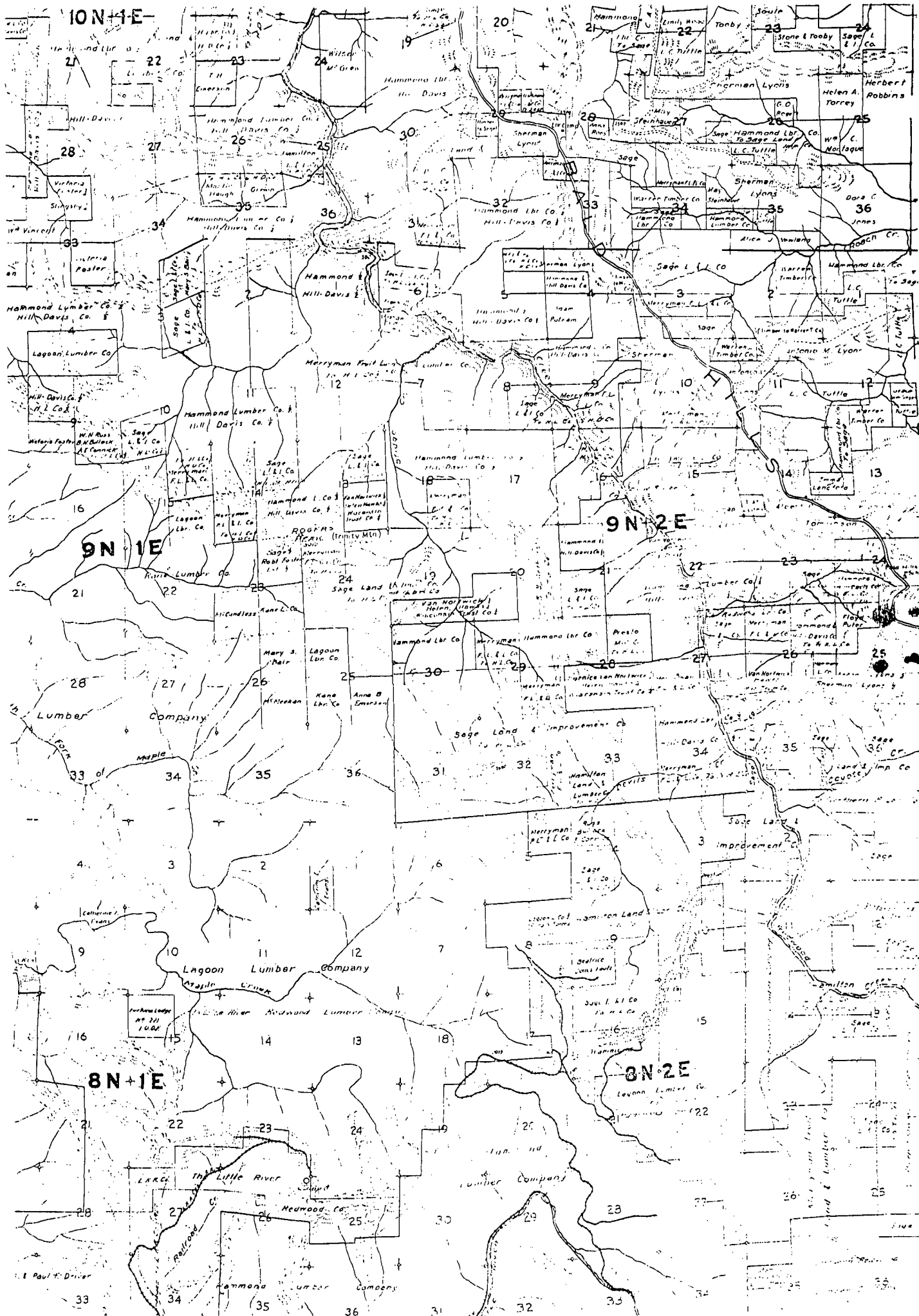
EUREKA TO HORN BROOK CONTINUED

Somes Bar	8.2	98.4	112.1
Blue Nose	17.6	116.0	94.5
Happy Camp	23.4	149.4	71.1
Snad Valley	19.3	158.7	51.8
Humburg	9.4	168.1	42.4
Horse Creek	6.2	174.3	36.2
Oak Bar	5.0	179.3	31.2
Willow Bar	4.6	183.9	26.6
Pacific Highway	20.0	203.9	6.6
Hornbrook			

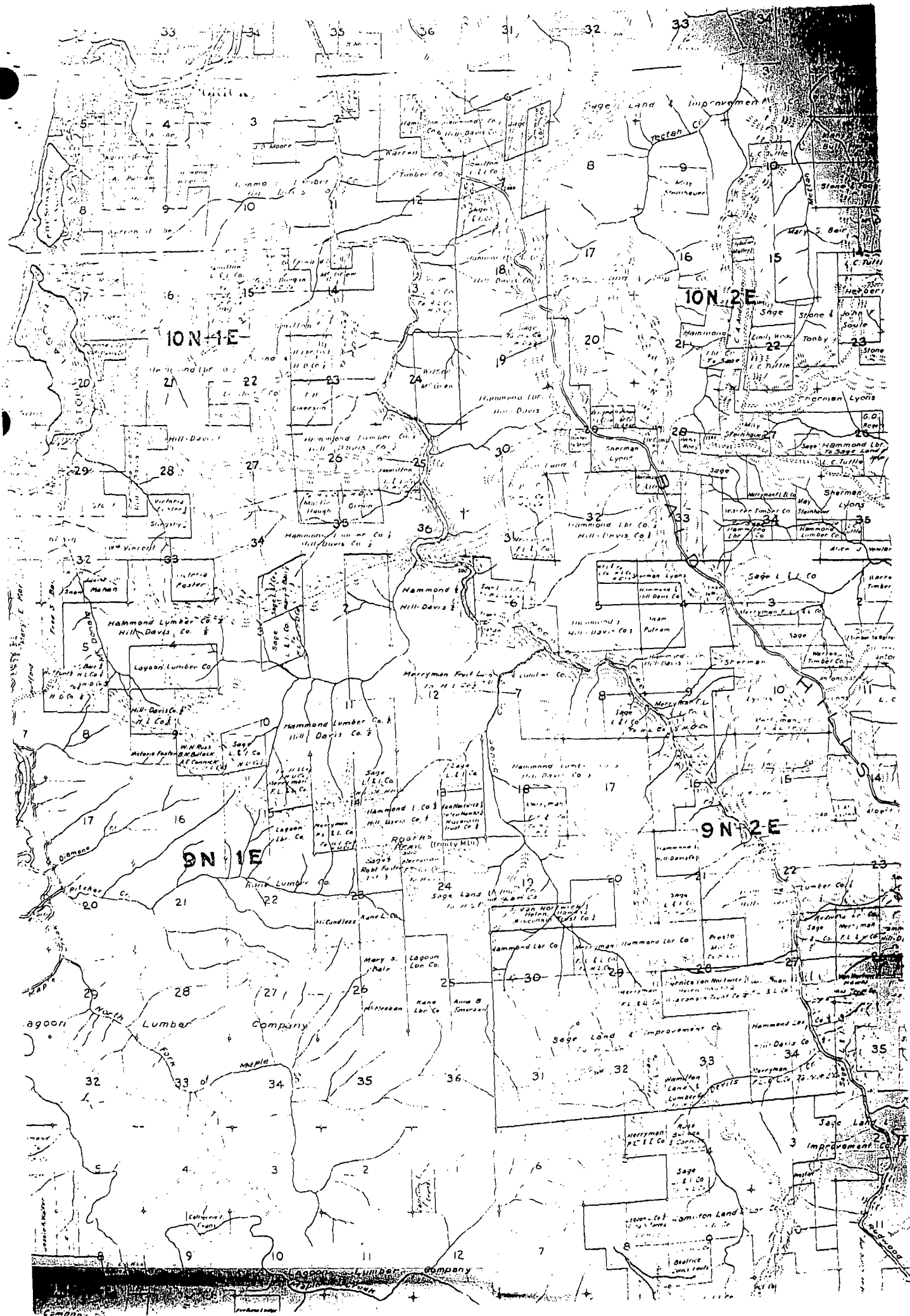




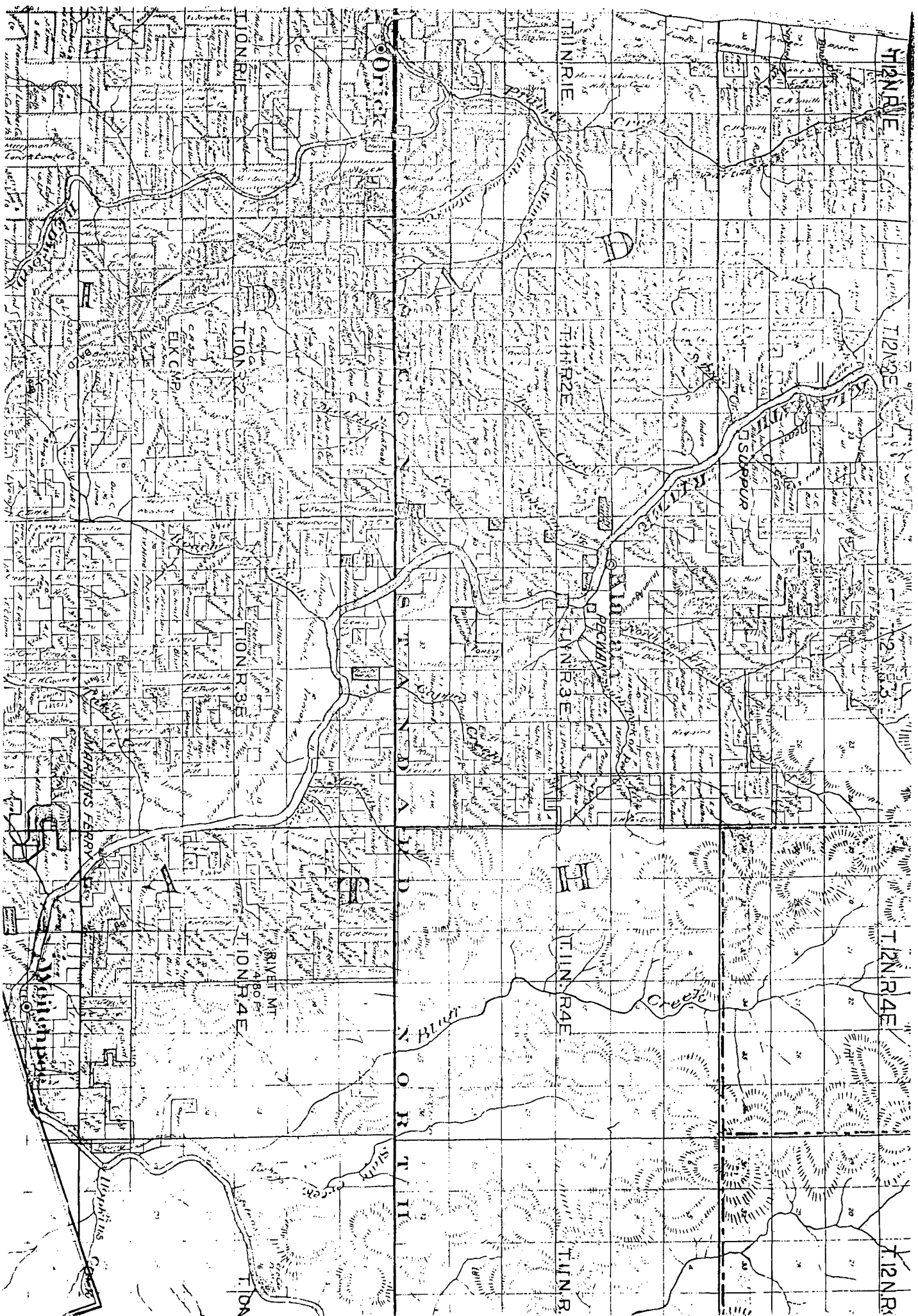












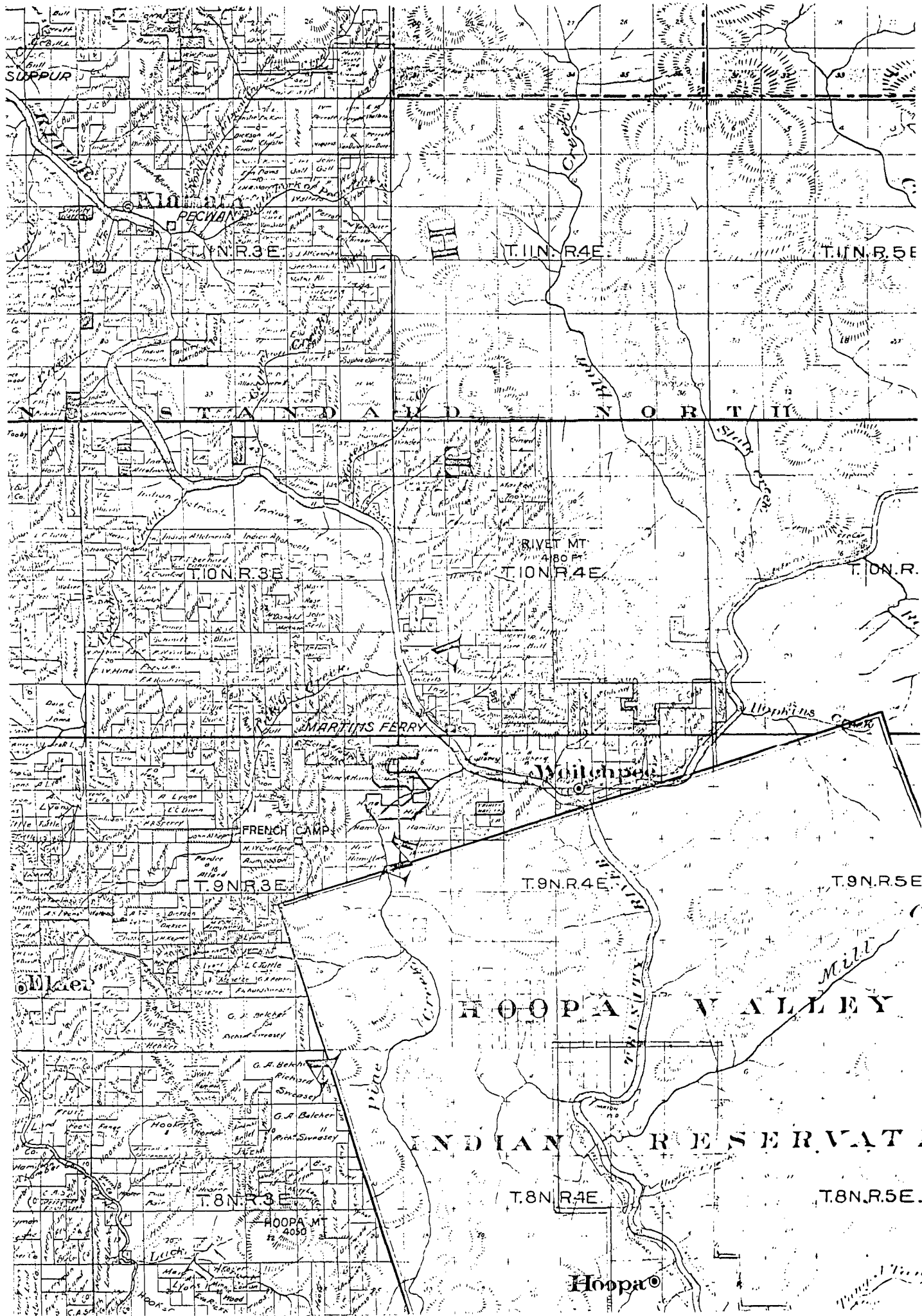


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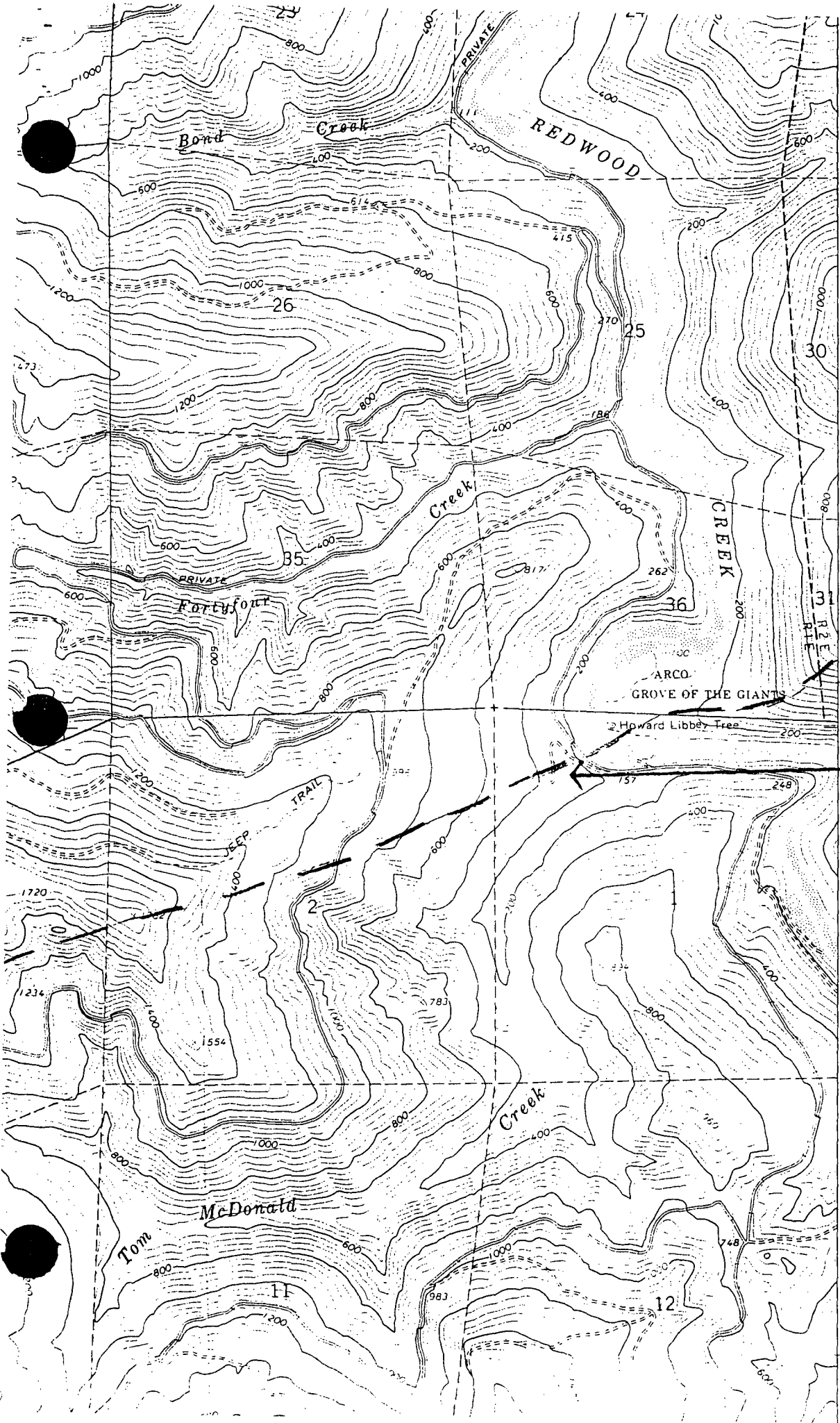












FEET

4565

4564

4563

T. 10 N.

12'30"

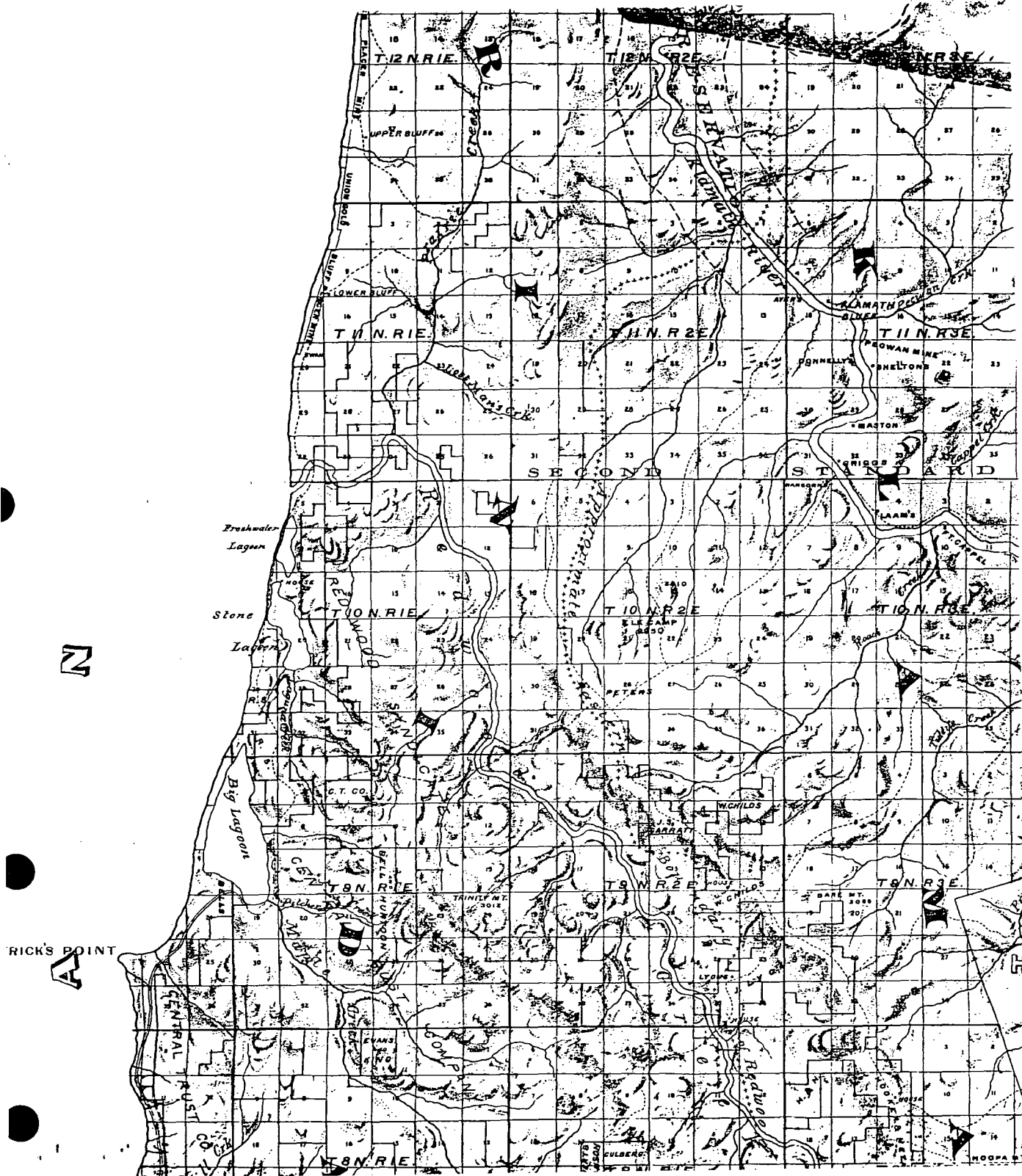
T. 9 N. Original Trinidad Trail Route

4561

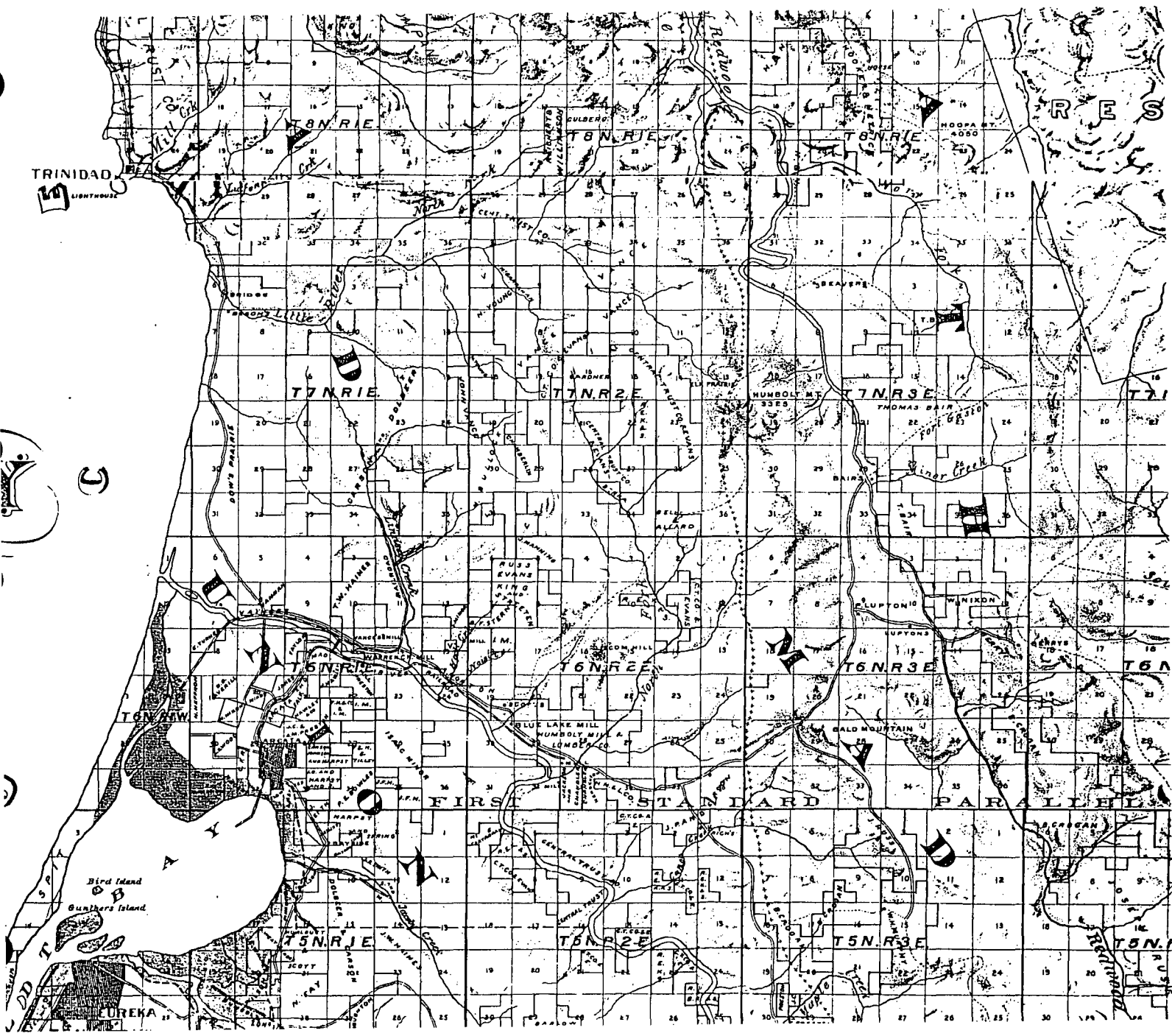
COYOTE PEAK 1:62 500  
1266 III

BASE MAP  
(2 sheets)

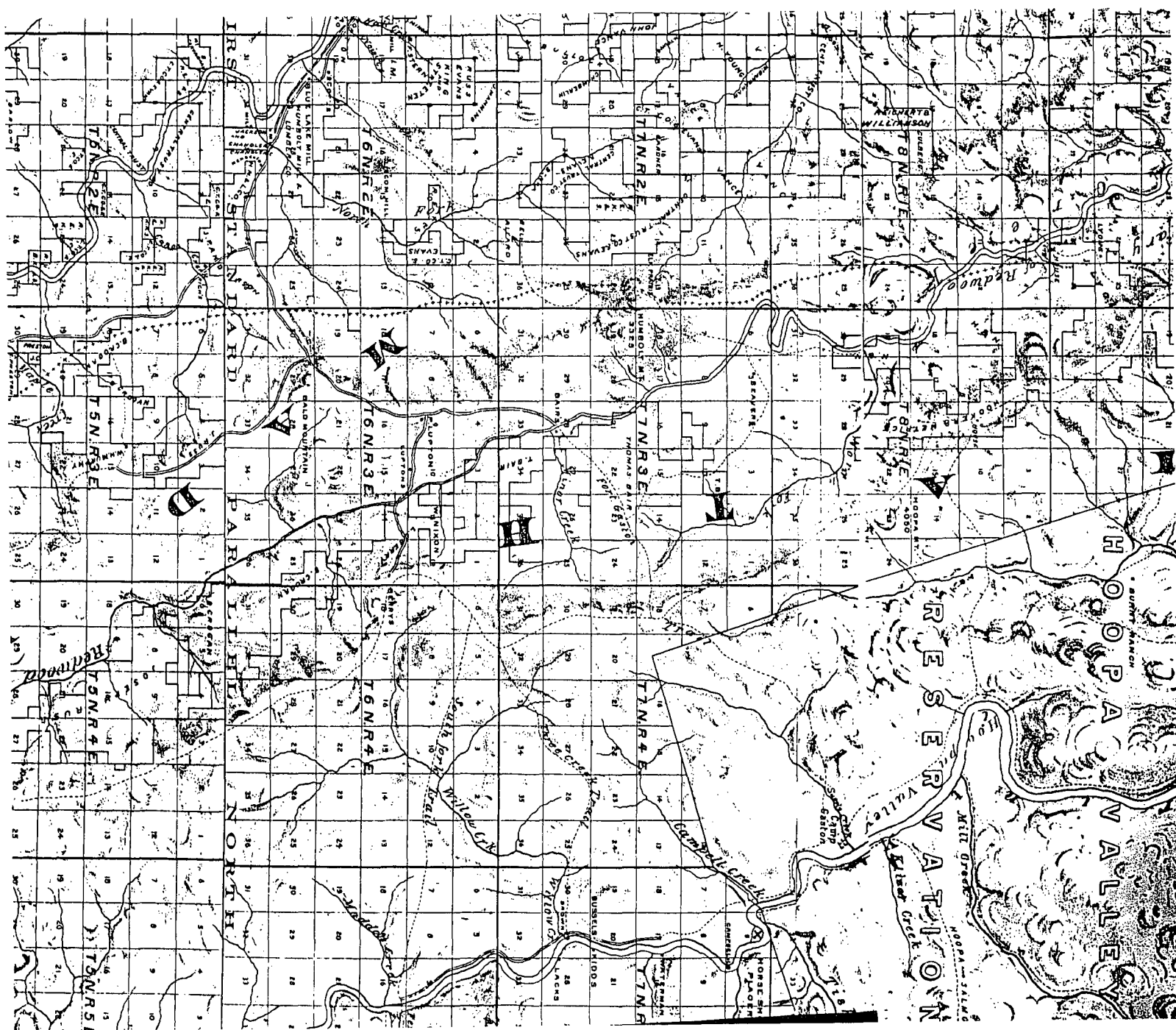




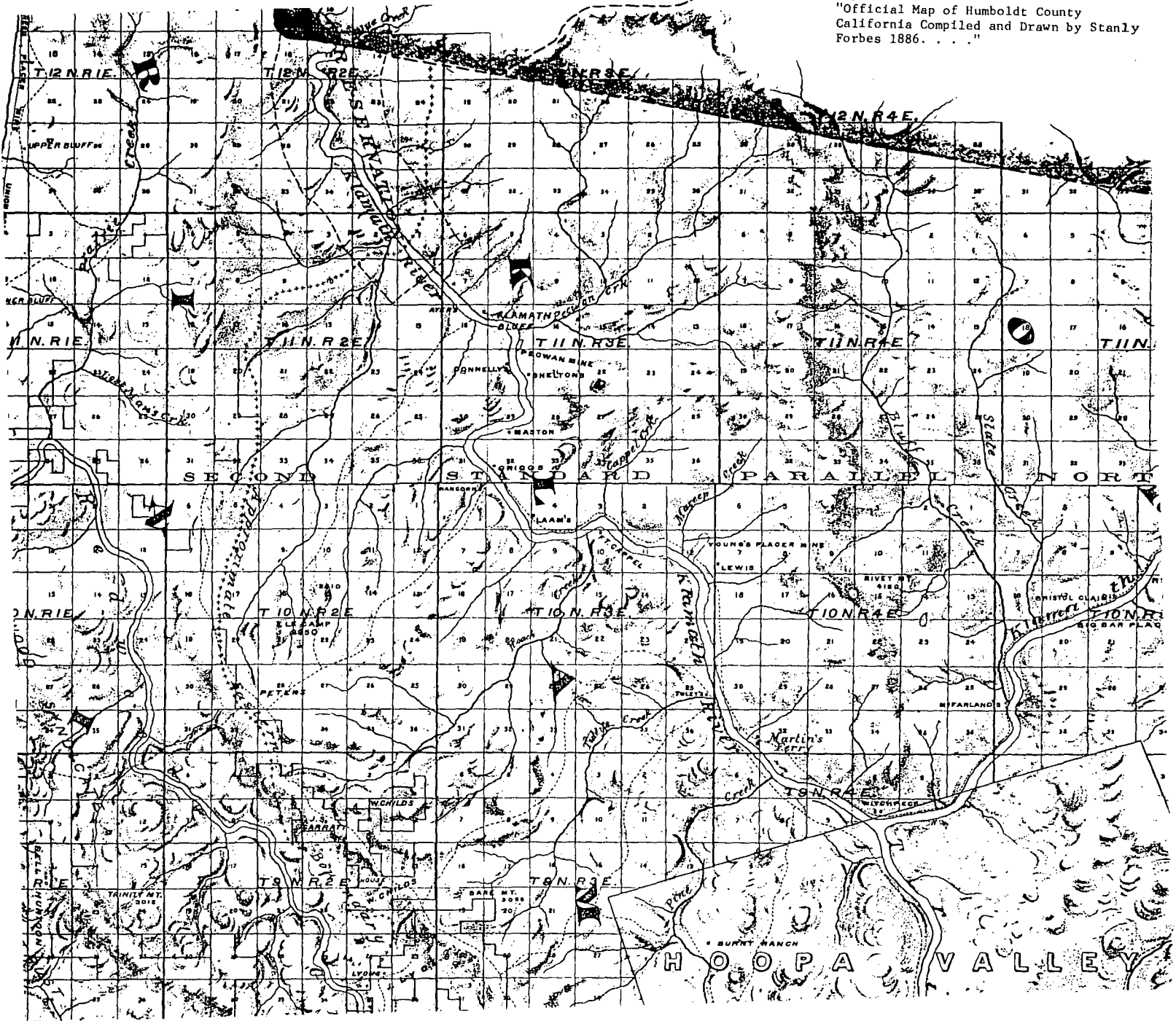














# CALIFORNIA.

J. N. LENTELL

SCALE OF MILES

## REFERENCES

RAILROADS  
LIGHT HOUSES

COPYRIGHT 1914 BY J. M. L. P. & S. L.

2023. 9. 2 : 21

**Figure 1.** The effect of the number of trials on the mean accuracy of the responses.



Pyote Peak  
Quad

Property

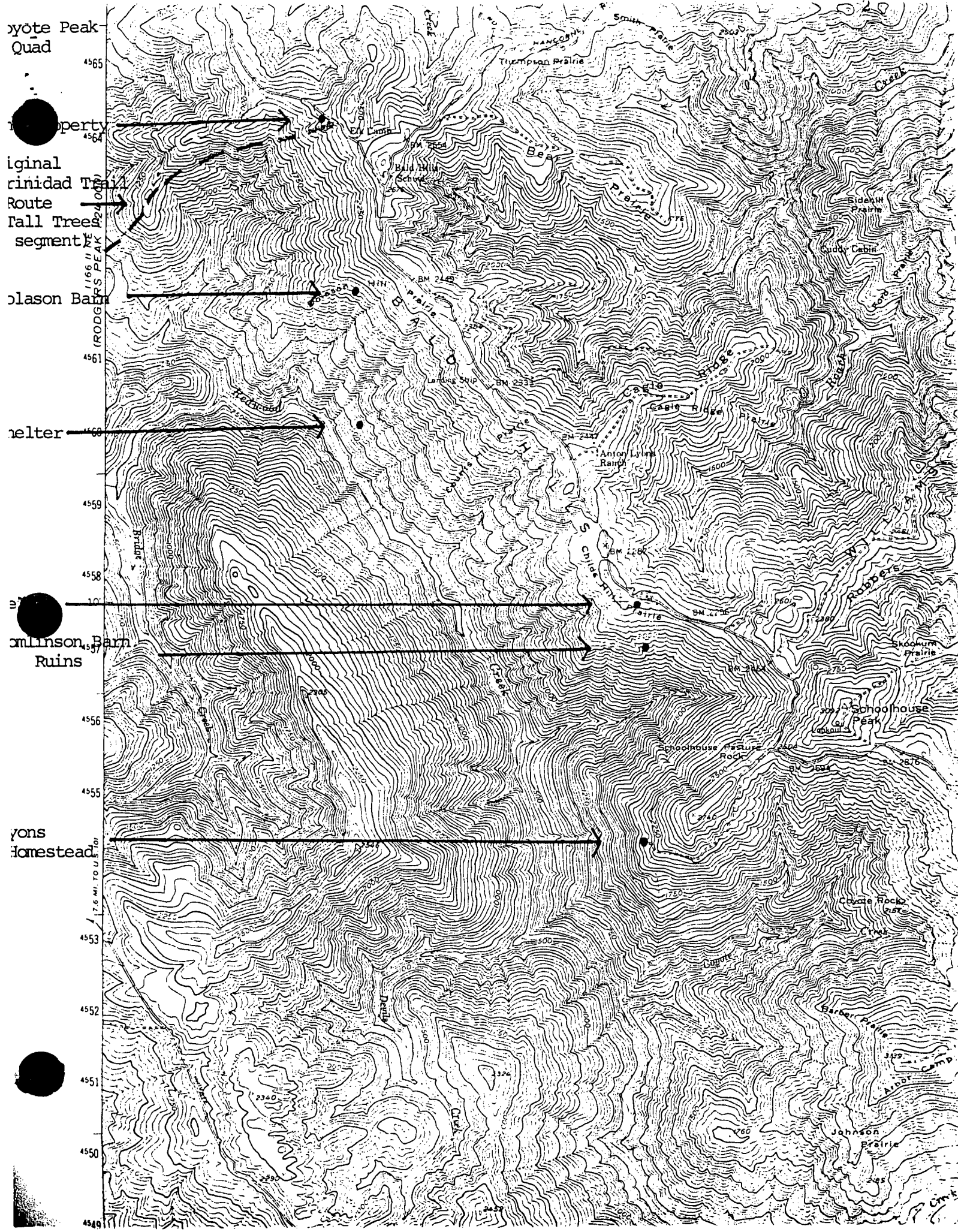
Original  
Trinidad Trail  
Route  
Fall Trees  
segment

Olason Barn

Welter

Lincoln Barn  
Ruins

Yons  
Homestead





Green, Linda Historical Overview of Red-ck. Basin  
1980 and Bald Hills Region of R.N.P.  
R.N.P.

p. 2 - D. 22. Dugg "open orchard of oaks and  
with fine grasses" 1849

p. 4 # B. 3. Native Vegetation - grasses, brush, willows  
bottomlands: cottonwood, alder, salmon brush  
and spruce

p. 5 - C. Bald Hills

p. 9 - D. 13 - Trinidad Trail, Elk Camp

p. 10 - 13 - Ref. to bridge across R.C. - "lacked one yr"

" # D - trails

p. 14 - # C cattle brought in @ 1850's

p. 39 # C Logging along R.C.

@ 1881

P. 37 - ROAD BETWEEN BAIR ZANICH AND HOOKER'S  
COMPLETED IN 1917



Bickel, Polly A Study of Cultural Resources  
1979 of RNP. -

No specific info. on Vegetation -

mainly arch. resources, impact of human activities  
including logging on sites.



Bearse, Edwin

R. N. P.

p. 13 - 2. Location of Village -

Indian gathering on Bald Hills - seeds, roots  
acorns

p 155- Timber Industry 1850-1953