

Yolo County Historical Society



Prez Says

Yeah, the cool weather finally has arrived. Cool nights, cold mornings. Does it get any better than this? I was able to wear a sweater the other day. Now, it's garden time. Planting flowers and vegetables that will not die after an afternoon of heat!

This newsletter has Part 2 of our history of Knights Landing. I hope you all enjoyed the little bit of history of the Chinese in that area. I am also including an article from the *Daily Democrat* in 1935 about boys who shot a turkey on Main Street. I thought it was appropriate for this time of year. If I have previously published it, I apologize, but sometimes reading something twice is a good thing!

I must apologize to one and all. I inadvertently did not understand that the information that I shared with you about Knights Landing was from the estate of Ralph Webb. His sister graciously gave the book to Pat Campbell. When she told me about it, I was thrilled because we do not get much information about some of the small communities in the county. He was responsible for bringing William Freeman, Jr., a doctor to Knights Landing in 1951. I hope that clarifies the issue.

A bit of sad news for the YCHS – Laurel, from L & S Printing has retired! She has been our go to printer for years. I will miss her. Don't people understand that when you rely on them, they can't retire!!!

Oh well, no one listens to me.

Take care and have a Happy Fall.

Remember, As Always, History Rules

Kathy Harryman, President

Patrons - we thank you very much!

You, also, can be a patron by **contributing** \$100 or more.

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Knights Landing: Part 2

As with the account in the last issue, I find this also to be unbearably sad . – BAS

*The following information is from our book, **Knights Landing The River, the Land and the People** by Shipley Walters, with Tom Anderson*

For about 1,100 years the Patwin culture flourished on the bank of the Sacramento River; then within thirty years it was gone. First came of the Spanish explorers, and after 1821 when Spain lost California to Mexico, foreigners from many nations gradually infiltrated all the territory occupied by the Patwin. American and British hunters and trappers killed their animals for hides and furs without regard for any existing 'rights' of the Patwin. Americans built houses and barns on Patwin land granted to them by the Mexican government. The Patwin were powerless to resist, for the newcomers used guns to enforce their wishes.

The most serious threat to the Patwin came not from the guns of the newcomers, but from the diseases they inadvertently brought with them. In 1833 a malaria epidemic and in 1837 smallpox killed perhaps 75 percent of the Patwin population. Whole villages were wiped out, the dead left lying on the ground because there was no one left to bury them.

In 1850, when California became a state and Yodoy¹ became part of Yolo County, there were very few Patwin left alive. Those who survived the ravages of disease fled to the hills, were forcibly relocated or were assimilated into the growing American communities as paid workers or slaves. A special census in 1852 listed only 120 Patwin between the ages of two and 66 living in the Knights Landing district.

The next section of information is from the memories of Ralph Webb, who arrived in Knights Landing in 1951.

The name Yolo is a corruption of the word "Yodey"¹ which means tule or rush land and was also the name of natives who had headquarters in early days on the Yodey mound at Knights Landing. The last chief of note called "Motti" stated that the Yodey were here before the Wintun.

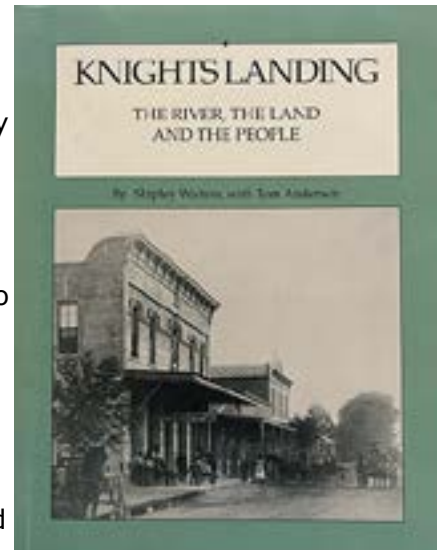
When the white man arrived with his gunpowder, disease, and bad whiskey it was curtains for the poor red man. He soon found the pale face was the Lord of all creation the most unmerciful killer.

The Indians for years fished for salmon in the Sacramento River at the four-mile eddy. In their group, they had an old Indian who owned all the fishing equipment and directed the fishing and called the salmon. He would wade into the water and call the salmon. He lived many years. When he died the Indians thought they could no longer catch salmon because there was no one to call the fish. They burned all the nets and did not fish again, no one to call the salmon, was their excuse.

A few years back, a large portion of the old Indian mound at Knights Landing was bulldozed away to use in building the railroad. This cruel act was one in the interest of progress. ...an old Indian heard of the destruction of this noble old mound. He could not believe it when he saw the remains of his ancestors being dug up and scattered around. It was more than he could stand. He was so heartbroken, his tears flowing unrestrained.

¹Spelled 'Yodoy, Yodoi, Yodey in the various historical resources used in this paper.

continued



continued - **Knights Landing**

This mound was not only the sepulture of the Indians dead but the refuge for the living in times of flood. In the times of floods, many boatloads of refugees were unloaded on this old (Yodoy) Knights Landing Mound.

In 1833-34 a scourge perhaps smallpox, killed many Indians leaving only 152 in Yolo County. This epidemic was brought in by the trappers that invaded the country. They also destroyed countless thousands of wild animals on which the Indians depended on for their living.

In the early days of Yolo County slavery was practiced. Two men are mentioned as slave traders. In 1846, it was customary to make slaves of the Indians when they had work to be done. They would organize a party and make a raid upon some tribe and capture as many as they required. The raid was usually led by Don Antonio Armijo, a Spaniard and a notorious outlaw. Andrew Kelsey was another slave trader and was said to have become wealthy at trading in slaves. The town of Kelseyville was named after him.

The Indians in Knights Landing would run out of wives and go up to Cortina creek above what is now Arbuckle where Indians of the same tribe lived and return with a new wife, as simple as that.



Youthful Marksmen

Boys Shoot Turkey as Main Street Applauds

Daily Democrat, November 27, 1935

Woodland had an old-fashioned turkey shoot Tuesday afternoon on Main street to amuse dozens of shoppers who were in the vicinity of the Columbia Market and Hotel Woodland.

A half dozen Chinese lads happened to be playing in the alley back of the Woodland Produce company when a turkey escaped from the hands of G. Hing.

The bird flapped its wings and lifted itself to an adjoining room. The Chinese youngsters spotted the bird and immediately started out to catch it.

A smart bird, the turkey flew over the Chicago Café, Canton Café, the old police station and finally landed on the roof of the Columbia Market. The young hunters followed close behind managing to frighten the turkey to the front wall of the Woodland Hardware and Plumbing company.

One Chinese lad ran for his gun. The turkey remained in the same spot until the marksman pulled the trigger. The turkey fell dead on the sidewalk in front of the hardware store. One woman, whose name could not be learned, just missed getting hit.

The Chinese boys returned the dead bird to its owner. The Hing family will have roast turkey Thanksgiving Day at 2 o'clock.

YCHS Newsletter

Yolo County Historical Society

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Dated Material

Vision Statement

The Yolo County Historical Society strives to preserve, protect and acknowledge the diverse history of Yolo County through education, communication and advocacy.

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