TRACKING JEDEDIAH SMITH THROUGH HUPA TERRITORY

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IT WAS LATE WINTER IN Hoopa Valley. The year was 1828. Northwestern California was as yet unclaimed by any non-Indian government, including the ruling Mexican government of Alta California, distant by hundreds of miles to the south. The Hudson's Bay Company was a more ominous threat to Indian life, sending explorers from Oregon into California to find the northern passage to the mystical Buenaventura River. In 1827 Francois Payette, traveling with Peter Skene Ogden for the Hudson's Bay Company, led a scouting party down the Klamath River into California. He reached the Yurok Indian village of Weitchpec, only six miles north of Hoopa Valley. There he saw knives, axes, and even tea kettles, Hudson's Bay Company trade goods that had traveled south through the aboriginal Indian trade network, presaging the appearance of the traders themselves (Dillon 1975:60).

White contact for the Hupa Indians occurred late in the history of the United States. The floodgates of change opened wide with the California Gold Rush of 1849. After 1850 Indian culture in northwest California, assaulted by tens of thousands of miners, was shattered (Norton 1979). Before 1850, before gold, there had only been a few trappers who explored northwest California by land and sea, in search of fur bearing animals. Few white explorers and trappers must have actually passed through Hoopa Valley itself before the Gold Rush, because by the 1851 McKee treaty expedition, there were still no white settlers in the valley, nor white allies to conduct the treaty negotiations on their behalf, as there were for the neighboring Yurok Indians on the Klamath River (Heizer 1972).

Northwest California did not prove to be a successful trapping territory, and was largely ignored during this pre-1850 era. The landscape was too rugged, the region was poor in beaver and sea otter, and the Indians were considered hostile and dangerous (Engelson 1939).

April 1828 in Hoopa Valley saw the creeks swollen with melting snow, the river running high, the deciduous trees in blossom, the prairie grasses becoming a green carpet. It was a time of awakening. These next two months were considered to be the most auspicious of the year for Hupa women to give birth.[1]

But "something was coming," the old people were later to tell the anthropologist Pliny Goddard. In May 1828 Jedediah Smith with

eighteen men and three hundred horses entered Hoopa Valley for the first time and thereby closed the door at The End of Indian Time. This phrase is used today by northwest California Indian people to mark the time boundary at the end of their all-Indian world.

There are oral traditions at the turn of the century from Elders telling stories about the first white men in Hoopa Valley (Goddard 1904:198–201). Hupa historian Byron Nelson names Jedediah Smith as this first non-Indian (Nelson 1978:38).

Although few records were kept by the trappers, a notable exception was the 1828 journal of Jedediah Smith, the only pre-1850 document to specifically describe Hoopa Valley. Not only is the documentary record fortunate to contain the explorer's account, but in his journal Jedediah Smith also recorded the date of First Contact between his party and the Hupa people, on May 6, 1828.

What follows here is an examination of the Jedediah Smith Journals themselves which attests in a quite practical manner that the great American "Pathfinder" did in fact lead an expedition through Hoopa Valley, thereby marking the end of one epoch and the opening of the next, an event which forever changed the direction and shape of Hupa history.

Methods of Historic Reconstruction

Jedediah Smith had been an ambitious and tireless explorer. He was the first white man to cross America in several journeys from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean. Many of his journeys have been traced by cartographers and historians. Smith himself not only kept a daily journal of his travels, in which he recorded the direction and distance traveled each day, but he also drew a map of the territory through which he passed. Trained in his youth in geography and cartography, Smith's maps were considered excellent representations of the land as constructed by an overland traveler. Although he did draw a map of the 1828 journey, it has been lost for well over a century. Historians, without the map, have only had the written journal accounts from which to reconstruct Smith's route through northwest California.

Secondary accounts of the trapping era in northwest California, county histories, and the Jedediah Smith literature all locate Smith's 1828 expedition in the vicinity of the Trinity and Klamath Rivers. However among the various attempts at detailed reconstruction of Smith's journey through the difficult mountain terrain of this region, no two researchers produce the same route (e.g. Chaffee 1929; Chase 1958; Sullivan 1934; Wiley 1941). Other less diligent writers have drawn a vague line over the mountains between the Sacramento

Valley and the Pacific Ocean, indicating only the general direction of Smith's expedition (e.g. Beck and Haase 1974; Dale 1918; Neihardt 1920).

Five principal sources of information reconstruct this moment at the edge of history. First were the journals kept by Jedediah Smith and his clerk Harrison Rogers (Sullivan 1934; Lewis 1943). Second were the Hupa Indian narratives of first contact with white men. Third was my personal experience and training in northwest California Indian culture, territorial layout, towns and trails. Fourth was a full set of topographic maps, from the United States Geological Service and from Humboldt County and Trinity County. Fifth was a first-hand knowledge of the landscape of northwest California, especially in the months of April, May and June. None of the sources alone could accomplish the task of reconstructing this old history. But because each of the sources had the potential to verify the others, Smith's journals could be cross-checked against geography and culture to tell the story of his historic journey through California Indian country in the spring of 1828.

The two Hupa Elders who told stories of First Contact to the anthropologist Pliny Goddard at the turn of this century were recalling events that had occurred when they were approximately ten years old. Goddard guessed their ages to be around 70–75 years old at the time they told the stories, placing First Contact back around 1830, a close enough date to allow the Smith expedition to have been in the era of First Contact.

Smith's journey through northwest California was traced onto twenty maps: United States Geological Service topographic maps of two scales, county maps and a three dimensional map of the state,[2] following the journey from Mission San Jose, California, up the Sacramento River Valley, and then across the western mountains to the Pacific Ocean. The two maps accompanying this article summarize those findings and are traced from USGS maps of Hupa territory.

It is important to begin with a definition of Hupa territory. The Hupa were a confederation of four groups speaking a common language, the Hoopa Valley Hupa, the South Fork Creek Hupa, the Redwood Creek Hupa (or Chilula, the Yurok name for them with which they have been labeled ethnographically), and the New River Hupa. Smith traveled through the first three of these territories, entering South Fork Creek Hupa territory on April 28, 1828, traveling through Hoopa Valley between May 6–10, 1828, and skirting Redwood Creek Hupa territory by traveling on its northern intertribal boundary trail from May 11–24, 1828.

In Smith's journal descriptions, there were four elements which I noted as important for indicating location. First, I mapped Smith's direction and mileage records, which proved to be consistently accurate. Second, I checked the journey's route against Smith's topographic descriptions, looking for mountains, rivers, ridges, and so on. Third, when Smith described Indian cultural features, people and activities, I compared that against the ethnography of the tribal area through which he traveled. And fourth, each day's location was correlated with the locations and travel distance from the days before and the days after.

Jedediah Smith, Trapper and Explorer

The early 19th century was an era of westward expansion in America. St. Louis was the center of the American fur trade. The home of William Clark (of Lewis and Clark, the first non-Indian trailblazers of the American west), in St. Louis, embodied the American spirit of adventure, exploration and exploitation. At the beginning of the 19th century the Americans were in competition for hunting territory and national expansion with the British-Canadian Hudson's Bay Company and the French trappers to the north and west, the Russians on the Pacific Coast, and the Mexicans and Spanish in the southwest and California. Explorer-trappers, by mapping an area first, claimed use rights to it and established a basis for later colonial expansion. Each nationalistic trapping enterprise in the west had its own urban center in which the company offices were located, where furs could be sold, where new enterprises were planned, where the explorers' families lived; a city which epitomized civilization for the frontiersmen. For the Americans, this was St. Louis.

Located in this prosperous city, Jedediah Smith's trading firm of Smith, Sublette and Jackson sent out expeditions to the northern plains and western mountains and deserts, claiming new economic territory for themselves by mapping it, and reaping fortunes from the trapping of beaver. In 1822 Smith set out from Utah to explore the west for its trapping potential, along with fourteen men including his clerk Harrison Rogers.

Smith's party was "... as cosmopolitan a group as might be found almost anywhere in America, including Americans, French-Canadians, French Creoles, Mexicans, half-breeds, a Negro, Englishmen, Scotsmen and Irishmen ... Picture these hardy men, clad in fringed buckskin and moccasins. Around the waist a strong belt held a knife, pistols, shot pouch, powder horn, and leather bags containing pipe, tobacco, beaver lure, flint and steel, small tools, keepsakes and small essentials

(including for some a razor, for Smith at least was usually clean shaven). In the hand rested the trusty rifle. Accompanying them were the horses and mules laden with provisions, camp supplies, and beaver traps" (Chase 1958:6). In the journal of Harrison Rogers, Smith's clerk, there was a list of trade goods or "Indian presents" to be packed for their journey into Indian country: tin kettles, red ribbon, razors, several kinds of knives, looking glasses, rings, combs, bells, needles, awls and buttons (Dale 1918:197).

Smith crossed the Mohave desert to the southwest and entered southern California, looking for the legendary Buenaventura River which contemporary maps showed flowing from the Great Salt Lake west into the Pacific Ocean at San Francisco Bay. He traveled as far as Mission San Jose, south of San Francisco. In order to rendezvous back in Utah in 1827, Smith completed a difficult crossing of the snow covered Sierra Nevada mountains and of the Nevada-Utah desert almost without food. But he did make the rendezvous, selling his furs for over $22,000, and setting out ten days later with a new crew back towards California.

The Mohave Indians attacked his party, killing ten men. Smith escaped with eight men and they traveled to northern California to reach Smith's previous stopover at Mission San Jose. Smith had sold his furs and spent the $4,000 to buy three hundred horses and mules, which he planned to drive north up the valley of the Buenaventura to the mountains of Oregon where a great profit would be realized on them, and in the process he aimed to be the first explorer to open the California-Oregon trade route. The British-Canadian Hudson's Bay Company had sent out expeditions to find the passage to California, but unsuccessfully. The competition was intense to find this valuable route through unclaimed trapping territory. Personal fortunes, historic reputations, the expansion of international boundaries, all these were the prizes waiting for the first trailblazer between California and Oregon.

Smith's 1828 Expedition into Northwest California

In early 1828 Jedediah Smith with eighteen men in his party, driving three hundred horses and mules, traveled up the Sacramento River valley, trapping beaver as they went. Near the modern town of Red Bluff, there were mountains blocking their continued northerly journey, and there appeared to be a pass in the mountains to the northwest. It was in this northwest direction into the mountains that Smith headed his party.

After traveling northwest over very difficult mountainous terrain and passing through the territory of some hostile Indian villages,

losing horses and mules on the precipitous trails, with snow on the ridges where they traveled, the land providing insufficient game and that being poor in fat content, Smith turned north then west, following several large rivers until he reached the Pacific Ocean.

The expedition followed the coastline from California to the Umpqua River in Oregon. It was upstream on the Umpqua where Indian warriors attacked the Smith party killing fourteen men. Smith survived along with three other men, Big John Turner, Richard Leland and Arthur Black, who found their way north to the Hudson's Bay headquarters at Fort Vancouver on the Columbia River (Morgan 1953:268–269).

The Recovery of Smith's Journal

A Hudson's Bay Company expedition was sent south into Oregon to learn what had happened to cause the massacre and to recover Smith's lost furs, journals, maps, other documents, horses, and equipment. Both Smith's journal and one of the journals of his clerk Harrison Rogers which began on May 10, 1828 were recovered. Smith's descriptive journals and the map he had drawn of the territory, gave him the distinction of being the first pathfinder from California to Oregon.

The fame of Smith's map spread quickly. Albert Gallatin used it to compile the western data for his famous 1836 map of the Indian Tribes of North America (Gallatin [1836] 1918). The Hudson's Bay Company, in recovering the map, gained access to its information. Without the Umpqua attack on Smith's party and his subsequent need for the help of the Hudson's Bay Company, Smith's route would have remained the exclusive property of the American fur trappers from St. Louis.

The map has since disappeared and no copy of it survives. The original journal has also disappeared, but Samuel Parkman's handwritten copy of it from the 1830s survives at Dakota Wesleyan University in Mitchell, South Dakota.[3]

Smith's Death in 1831

Smith left Oregon with a Hudson's Bay Company expedition to trap beaver in Flathead Indian country, continuing the next season into the Rocky Mountains, finally returning to St. Louis for the first time in over five years to sell his furs and become a renowned and wealthy man at 31 years of age. In 1831 he set out again southwest towards Santa Fe, New Mexico. Along this trail, Comanche Indian warriors attacked and killed Jedediah Smith. He was thirty-two years

old. His legacy was that he had been the first to map the geography of western Indian country for the expansion of American trappers, traders, and settlers, all of whom were bellwethers of a holocaust about to destroy the wholeness of Indian life forever.

Jedediah Smith's Journal, April 21–May 13, 1828[4]

[JSS] Jedediah Smith journal entry
[LD] Lee Davis commentary

April 21, 1828

[JSS] 21st April W N W 12 Miles Traveling same as yesterday. I found some grass on the side of the Mountain about 1 mile from the river and encamped. There appeared to be a small valley on the river which turned in its course nearly North and [nearly North] received a branch from the South. Several Smokes were in sight during the day and several of my horses were verry lame from the roughness of the traveling.

[LD] The Smith Expedition is traveling west along Hayfork Creek when he sights Hyampom Valley. Here Hayfork Creek enters the South Fork of the Trinity River flowing north. Smith camps to the east of the valley where he sights smoke from a village of Chimariko Indians in Hyampom (Dixon 1910).

April 22, 1828

[JSS] 22d N W 3 Miles and encamped where there was good grass in a small valley on the ------. Passed several indian Lodges the indians themselves were yelling on the hills and some appeared in sight of camp, but when I attempted to go to them they ran off. The river to which I had given the name Smiths was about 40 yards wide with a strong current and wide sand bars. Its course was N N W. The Mountains of the vicinity were covered with Pine timber and the summit covered with snow.

Just before sunset one of my horse guard came in and told me that there were some indians on the opposite side of the river close at hand. I went with one man to see what they wanted but before I got down they were throwing their arrows at the guard. They were at a distance of 150 yards but their arrows scarcely reached us. I called for some men and went down to the bank of the river and fired several guns wounding one or two of them but killed none dead on the ground. They then ran off yelling and troubled us nor more that night. Among those troublesome indians I was obliged to put my

horses in a pen every night and have them guarded the fore part of the night but as those indians had but little clothing and the weather in those mountains was cold there was no necessity for continuing the guard during the latter part of the night. Several of my horses were verry lame.

[LD] What Smith calls Smiths River is the South Fork of the Trinity River. As he travels first along the South Fork, and then the main artery of the Trinity River, and finally the Klamath River, he misjudges them all to be one river which he continues to call Smiths River. Smith's men are attacked by Chimariko Indians from Hyampom. The Indians respond to the Smith party by yelling from a distance. There is a skirmish between the Chimariko shooting arrows (barely a 150 yard range) but inflicting no harm and Smith's guards shooting guns and wounding several Indians. Late April is still very cold and rainy in this region, and the mountains here are quite steep, so Smith's men and his three hundred horses and mules are having a rough time of it.

April 23, 1828

[JSS] 23d April I got under way quite early and went down the river about two miles but the mountain came in close to the river so that I was obliged to order the party back to camp as there was no possibility of proceeding without crossing the river. I went with two men to look for a pass. On examination I soon found the best course would be to cross the river and for that purpose found a ford and returned to camp. No indians were about in sight.

[LD] As usual Smith scouts ahead of the rest of his party to locate the best course on which to proceed. After yesterday's battle which wounded several Indians, they stay out of sight.

April 24, 1828

[JSS] 24th North 7 Miles. Early in the morning crossed the river without any material accident and continued down the river the mountain coming in quite close to the river with Brushy thickets and deep ravines. One point of the Mountain over which I was obliged to pass was so exceedingly Rocky and rough that I was four hours in moving one mile. The Rocky hills over which we had to clamber mangled the feet of the horses most terribly. At camp [were] the steep side hills were covered with Oak and Pine timber and the grass was tolerably good. I observed a kind of tree with which I was before unacquainted. The largest were 1½ feet in diameter and 60 feet high. The limbs were smooth and the bark snuff colored. It was at that

time in Bloom. Some Europeans who were of my party called it the Red Laurel.

[LD] They cross the South Fork of the Trinity River near Hyampom, and travel its western shore. This was an aboriginal buffer zone between the Chimariko and South Fork Hupa tribes, uninhabited and in rough terrain. Smith sees no more Indians in this intertribal buffer zone for the next two weeks until he approaches a South Fork Hupa village on May 6. And during this two weeks, the expedition is beset with environmental problems, rough terrain for the horses, fatigue for men and horses alike, food running out and very little game, and with cold and snowy weather.

April 25, 1828

[JSS] 25th My horses were so much fatigued that I remained in camp. Several of us went out to hunt and killed 3 Deer [they ate.] Some of the men found some nooses set to catch Deer. They make a fence of Brush leaving a small aperture over which a cord is extended with a noose sufficiently long to admit the head of a deer. It is of course set in some of the common passes.

[LD] The uninhabited buffer zone between tribes was used as hunting and gathering territory. Deer snares set on animal paths, the brush fence with a noose in its opening described by Smith, were often owned hunting spots. The nooses and brush fence were probably set by Chimariko Indians.

April 26, 1828

[JSS] 26th 5 Miles N W About two Miles down the river and immediately below the mouth of a creek coming in from the West the Mountain closed in to the river which ran in a channel of cleft rocks. I therefore turned up the creek and encamped on the north side where it was 30 yards wide rapid and difficult fording. The traveling rough and rocky being along the abrupt sides of the mountain on which were some Oak Pine and Hemlock timber and tolerable grass. More of my horses and Mules were wounded by the rocks during the days march.

Any persons apprised of the character of the country through which I was traveling might form something of an Idea of the difficulty of traveling with a Band of three hundred horses. After encamping I sent two men to look for the best pass over the mountain which lay on the North. They returned at dark and told me it would not be difficult to ascend to the top of the Mountain but that they could not see far enough to judge of the traveling beyond.

[LD] Grouse Creek enters the South Fork of the Trinity River from the west. Two miles downriver (north) from this confluence is the major rapids on South Fork Creek. Smith's scouts look for a pass over Sims Mountain.

April 27, 1828

[JSS] 27th As I was not satisfied as to the best route by which to continue my [route] journey and as the grass about my camp was tolerably good I did not move the party but sent 3 men back for a horse that had been left and went myself with one man to view the country. The best traveling I could discover was to steer NW and keep on a range of hills [which was] the divide between the River and the creek which had its rise apparently nearly in the direction to which the river ran. The hunters killed 4 Deer and 2 Grizzly Bear. The men from horse hunting returned having found 2 instead of one.

[LD] From Sims Mountain, Smith looks to the west and sees Mosquito Creek running south into Grouse Creek, and looks to the east and sees South Fork Creek which is flowing north. The divide between the two creeks along which Smith travels for the next week is Hogback Ridge. Not only were these the first non-Indians to travel overland through this region, but these were the first horses in the area as well. Horses escaped all along Smith's route. They would have fit into the precontact Indian worldview as food rather than transportation.

April 28, 1828

[JSS] 28th N W 3 Miles ascending the steep side of the mountain and arrived at the top and turning N N W the ground a little descending from three fourths of a mile the snow was three or four feet deep. Leaving in that distance the snow and continuing the same course for 5 Miles over high ridges and through Deep ravines along the sides of abrupt hills and through dense thickets after working hard all day we made but 8 Miles and encamped where I was obliged to make a pen for the horses to keep them from s[t]rag[g]ling off as there was no grass for them. At night it was found that 5 were missing, two of that number being packed one with fur and one with some clothing belonging to the Men. By the help of a good Moon light two of them were found before I went to bed.

[LD] The party climbs Sims Mountain, covered with three feet of snow, to Hogback Ridge, along which or rather up and down which they travel.

April 29, 1828

[JSS] 29th North 3 Miles As soon [as it was] light I sent the [company] forward and went myself with 3 Men to look for the lost horses. Found them in different places and safe the packs on the Mules having remained on during the night without turning. I got to camp about sunset and found good grass.

[LD] Losing horses was like having your savings account wiped out, but losing horses packed with food and clothing meant facing the immediate possibility of death by freezing or starvation.

April 30, 1828

[JSS] 30th N [W] 1½ mile with the intention of going to the river but I found the deep ravines impossible and the river yet washing the base of high hills. I there[fore] retraced my steps to a place where I had seen good grass and encamped sending men off at the same time to see if there was any possibility of passing back from the river. When the[y] returned they told me they thought it passible although the traveling would be bad.

[LD] To this day no road has been constructed along this rugged stretch of South Fork Creek. There were also no Indian settlements along this difficult gorge of South Fork Creek.

May 1, 1828

[JSS] May 1st 1828 North West 3 Miles I went but little beyond where the men had gone the day before when I found the traveling so bad that I was obliged to encamp and send on again to search for a pass. At my camp there was verry little grass. The men returned and reported the traveling extremely bad for about three Miles after which there was plenty of good grass. I went hunting with several men we killed [several] one Deer which was quite in time for our dried meat was nearly exhausted. Rain with some snow during Most of the day and following night.

[LD] They travel on Hogback Ridge, running out of food for men and horses, with inclement weather, over exhausting and dangerous terrain.

May 2, 1828

[JSS] May 2nd North 2 Miles. The road most terrible down steep hills which were extremely Rocky and Brushy. On the side of the mountain were some remarkably handsome hemlocks, the largest I had ever seen. Beside Hemlock was Pine and some Oak. On the point

of a ridge on which I encamped was some good grass. 4 Deer were killed.

[LD] The scouts had reported yesterday that conditions were about to improve, and that has begun to happen.

May 3, 1828

[JSS] May 3d 1 Mile North. I first made an attempt to move down towards the river but found it impracticable. I therefore returned to camp and moved north 1 Mile over traveling like that which I had now become accustomed. I encamped a mile from the river on a ridge which produced plenty of grass and Oak timber. Opposite my camp a large stream entered Smiths River from the East. It appeared even larger than the stream on which I had been traveling. One Mule lost. After encamping the hunters went out and killed two deer.

[LD] Smith sees the Trinity River converging from the east with South Fork Creek (Smiths River) next to which he had been traveling up on Hogback Ridge. The Trinity River, with the increased flow from South Fork Creek, changes its course here and flows north towards Hoopa Valley. Smith camps for the next three days on a low ridge overlooking the confluence. Although he does not mention it and must not have seen it, the large South Fork Hupa village of Tlelding was located in this vicinity (Davis 1987). In locating a camp, Smith looked for flat, grassy prairies uphill from the river canyons, for his horses and men. The Indians of northwest California used these prairies as important food resources, but located their villages closer to the river, on river terraces which would have been too cramped and not grassy enough for Smith's entourage. Therefore Smith was not competing with Indians for camping space, and was not taking his party through Indian villages. At Tlelding as at Hyampom, he did not approach the Indian village directly, and perhaps missed seeing it entirely.

May 4, 1828

[JSS] May 4 I was obliged to lay by in consequence of the lameness of my horses. I had my Beaver skins dried and sent men back on the trail to look for horses. The hunters killed 8 Deer and the Meat was cut and dried.

[LD] Still camping one mile from Tlelding.

May 5, 1828

[JSS] 5th May At the camp, some of my horses being unable to travel. I had my horses brought up and counted and found that there

was ten or twelve not to be accounted for. I therefore took one man and went back on the trail intending to go [back] to the 4th encampment directing Mr. Rodgers that in case [I was back] I did not return to start early on the following morning. I found two horses and got two miles on my way back.

[LD] Smith and another man retraced their route towards the May 1 camp looking for lost horses.

May 6, 1828

[JSS] May 6th When I got to the party in the morning they were 3 Miles on their way traveling north. For that distance the road was tolerable being near the river. The Mountain came in near the river but was not so abrupt as it had been nor so high, particularly on the west side of the river. Passed several indian lodges and encamped opposite to one. Their Lodges were built differently from any I had before seen. They were 10 or 12 feet square, the sides 3 feet high and the roof shaped like a house. They were [shaped] built of split pine plank with 2 or 3 small holes to creep in at. About ½ Mile above camp a creek entered on the west side 20 yards wide. Rapid current.

After camping a canoe came down the river with a good many Deer skins on board. I made signs for them to come to [me] but they would not. 2 or 3 indians passed down on the opposite side of the river. I endeavored to persuade them to come over but did not succeed.

[LD] During this day Smith embarks on the main trail through Hupa territory (Davis 1988). It follows the course of the Trinity River, into which South Fork Creek has entered just past his last camp. This is South Fork Hupa territory. He camps just past the mouth of Willow Creek, swollen with late winter rains. He has his first view of Indians since he saw Chimariko Indians at Hyampom on April 22, two weeks before.

He remarks that Indian culture changes dramatically in this new cultural territory by noting such differences as house shape, appearance of canoes, the richness of deer hides, and the number of Indian people about. He has just entered the territory of the Hupa Indians, the classic example of Kroeber's northwest California culture area climax (Kroeber 1939:30).

May 7, 1828

[JSS] May 7th North 4 Miles then North West 5 Miles following the river as close as the traveling would permit. Passed through thickets and over two verry high rocky hills from the last of which the country had a much more promising appearance. Lost several Mules and

horses in the course of the day but found them all again. Several indians came to camp in my absence. They appeared friendly and made signs that they wished to trade Deer Skins for Axes & knives. Indian trails were becoming large and lodges of the kind mentioned more plenty than in the country through which we had for some time been traveling. I saw several places in the course of the day where there had been axes used. Judging from the size of the river and the appearance of the country I suppose the river had in the course of the days travel received a tributary from the East as large or larger than itself.

[LD] Smith travels through the uninhabited buffer zone between the South Fork Hupa and the Hoopa Valley Hupa, a region used for hunting and traveling between these allies in the Hupa confederacy. Both Horse Linto Creek and Tish Tang Creek as well as numerous smaller creeks flow into the Trinity River during this part of the journey. The first high hill he sees looms above Sugar Bowl ranch, and from the second hill above Tish Tang village, he gets his first panoramic view of Hoopa Valley, home of the Hoopa Valley Hupa people (Goddard 1903). The party camps opposite Medilding, the largest village in the valley.

While Smith's camp must have been quite remarkable, with three hundred horses, eighteen men including Mr. Ranne, a black man, and considerable paraphernalia, the Hupa did approach them in order to trade their deerskins for Smith's axes and knives.

Smith also observes the evidence of previous axe use. This corroborates the report a year earlier of Francois Payette, a scout for Peter Skene Ogden's Hudson's Bay Company fur brigade. In February 1827 he traveled from Oregon down the Klamath River to Weithcpec, only six miles north of Hoopa Valley. There he reported seeing trade goods like knives, axes, and tea kettles (Dillon 1975:60). Heizer and Mills also present evidence of metal, such as swords, knives, axes, needles and scissors, being traded in small numbers by ships to the coastal Yurok and Wiyot Indians, in the fur trade era between 1775 and 1817 (1952: passim). Although the explorer-trappers Jedediah Smith and Francois Payette were probably the first non-Indians in this inland region, trade goods had already traveled through the aboriginal Indian trade network, presaging the appearance of the traders themselves.

May 8, 1828

[JSS] 8th 2 Miles N W In the morning several indians came to camp different from the indians I had before seen in the country,

particularly in their dress and in the length of their hair which was long while nearly all the indians of the Buenaventura valley and the country generally I have distinguished by the appellation of short haired indians. These indians were clothed in [skin] Deer Skins Dressed with the hair on. The lower part of the body was left naked. Some of them had Mockasins. Their lodges were tolerably numerous and they had a few good canoes.

Soon after starting a horse ran off and detained me so long that I did travel but two miles before encamping. Two of my horses were found dead when we caught up to move on, poisoned as I supposed by eating some poisonous weed.

[LD] Smith had been absent the previous day when first contact had occurred between his party and the Hupa Indians, so he records his reactions to them on this day. He camps at Agency Field at the mouth of Supply Creek where there is considerable grass. He continues to note the dramatic cultural differences of the Hupa from all the Indian cultures through which he traveled, first in the Sacramento River Valley (which he called the Buenaventura Valley) and then northwest through Wintu and Chimariko territory. He notes their quite different clothing, moccasins, hair style, number of houses, house shape, and canoes.

May 9, 1828

[JSS] 9th N W 6 Miles Following the river 3 Miles but it turning more to the North and the indians informing me by signs that it was Rocky along the bank of the river. I turned N W following a ridge which was in that direction and encamped 2 or 3 Miles from the river on a creek. 3 horses lost. An abundance of Elk and some deer sign. One fine Elk killed.

[LD] Smith travels from his Supply Creek camp through the northern end of Hoopa Valley. The Hupa warn him about the steep gorge between Hoopa Valley and Weitchpec on the Klamath River, advising him to take their own intertribal trail up Bald Hill into the Redwood Creek Hupa region called Bald Hills. He camps at Big Creek, and records his first sighting of the coastal Roosevelt Elk, which lived abundantly in the Bald Hills and Redwood Creek region.

May 10, 1828

[JSS] 10th N W 5 Miles. To make this distance I traveled as much as ten Miles first attempting to move in towards the River with the intention of traveling along its bank but this I found impracticable and turned back on to the ridge and moved N West untill night over

hills rocky and steep and through thickets and deep ravines to a small creek where I encamped without any grass for my horses and was therefore obliged to make a pen for them. On examination I found several were missing, among the rest two that were packed.

[LD] From May 10 on, we also have the journal of Harrison Rogers, Smith's clerk and right hand man (Dale 1918: 237–308). It is not included here because it would increase the length of this article prohibitively. I sometimes refer to information in Rogers' journal.

Smith travels on Bald Hill trail almost to the mouth of Pine Creek on the Klamath River, and from there he turns west into the Bald Hills trying to reach French Camp Ridge on which the horses could travel. He camps on one of the small tributaries of Pine Creek. By going overland, Smith misses the confluence of the Trinity River as it flows into the Klamath River, where the Yurok town of Weitchpec was located. Assuming that there is one long river from South Fork Creek to the Trinity River to the Klamath River, he calls all of them Smiths River. While scouting ahead Smith sees an Indian, probably a Yurok from the Klamath River, between the Yurok village areas of Weitchpec upriver and Wahsek downriver (Pilling 1978).

May 11, 1828

[JSS] May 11th N W 1 Mile. I went up a verry steep hill and finding grass encamped and sent 4 Men back to look for the lost horses and a gun which had been lost at the same time. The men returned in the evening having found 13 horses. There was three yet missing and the gun was not found. The hunters killed three Deer.

[LD] They camp at Wiregrass Prairie on French Camp Ridge, in the intertribal region between the Hoopa Valley Hupa to the southeast, the Yurok to the north (Waterman 1920), and the Redwood Creek Hupa to the south (Goddard 1914). Like all uninhabited buffer areas in this region, it was used for intertribal traveling and hunting and gathering, mostly in family owned plots.

May 12, 1828

[JSS] 12th May I remained at the same camp and sent back two men to look for the lost horses. They found one but could not drive it to camp, therefore they were abandoned.

[LD] Camp still at Wiregrass Prairie.

May 13, 1828

[JSS] 13th 4Miles N W I had flattered myself that I was nearly over the bad traveling But I found this day of the old kind. The course

of the river was N N W and I made an attempt to go down and travel along its banks but did not succeed and was obliged to wind about among the hills and mountains.

[LD] Smith scouts the area along the Klamath River near the mouth of Tully Creek, north of the old Yurok village Wahsek which is the modern town of Martin's Ferry. The expedition crosses Tully Creek to make camp at Big Prairie on Williams Ridge.

NOTES

1. The spelling 'Hoopa' refers to the valley and geographic features. 'Hupa' refers to the people and the tribe.

2. I traced Smith's journey through northwest California from his journal onto four United States Geological Service topographic maps, scale 1:250,000, covering the land from Red Bluff in the Sacramento Valley to Crescent City on the Pacific Ocean. To accomplish this task, I consulted twenty maps, USGS topographic maps of two scales, 1:250,000 and 1:62,500, two excellent county maps, of Trinity County and Humboldt County, and a three-dimensional map of the state of California. The twenty maps are listed below.

USGS topographic maps, scale 1:250,000.
1. Redding, Ca. (NK 10–11) 1958, revised 1976.
2. Eureka, Ca. (NK 10–10) 1958, revised 1977.
3. Weed, Ca. (NK 10–8) 1958, revised 1977.
4. Crescent City, Ca. (NK 10–7) 1958, revised 1977.

USGS topographic maps, scale 1:62,500.
5. Hyampom, Ca. quadrangle. 1951.
6. Pilot Creek, Ca. quadrangle. 1951.
7. Ironside Mountain, Ca. quadrangle. 1952.
8. Willow Creek, Ca. quadrangle. 1952.
9. Blue Lake, Ca. quadrangle. 1951.
10. Salmon Mountain, Ca. quadrangle. 1952.
11. Hoopa, Ca. quadrangle. 1952.
12. Coyote Peak, Ca. quadrangle. 1952.
13. Forks of the Salmon, Ca. quadrangle. 1955.
14. Orleans, Ca. quadrangle. 1952.
15. Tectah Creek, Ca. quadrangle. 1952.
16. Ship Mountain, Ca. quadrangle. 1952.
17. Klamath, Ca. quadrangle. 1952.

County Maps
18. Humboldt County, Ca. (Erickson Maps) n.d.
19. Trinity County, Ca. (Erickson Maps) n.d.

State Map
20. California in 3-D. (Kistler Graphics) 1981.

3. I wish to thank Dakota Wesleyan University, in Mitchell, South Dakota, which owns the Jedediah Smith Journals, for granting me permission to quote the journals at length.

4. The journal entries come from Maurice Sullivan's *The Travels of Jedediah Smith* (1934:83–90). This was the only edition of Smith's 1828 journal ever published, and is reputed to have numerous errors in copying from the manuscript. In 1934 only 300 copies of the book were printed, making it extremely valuable and difficult to find or photocopy today.

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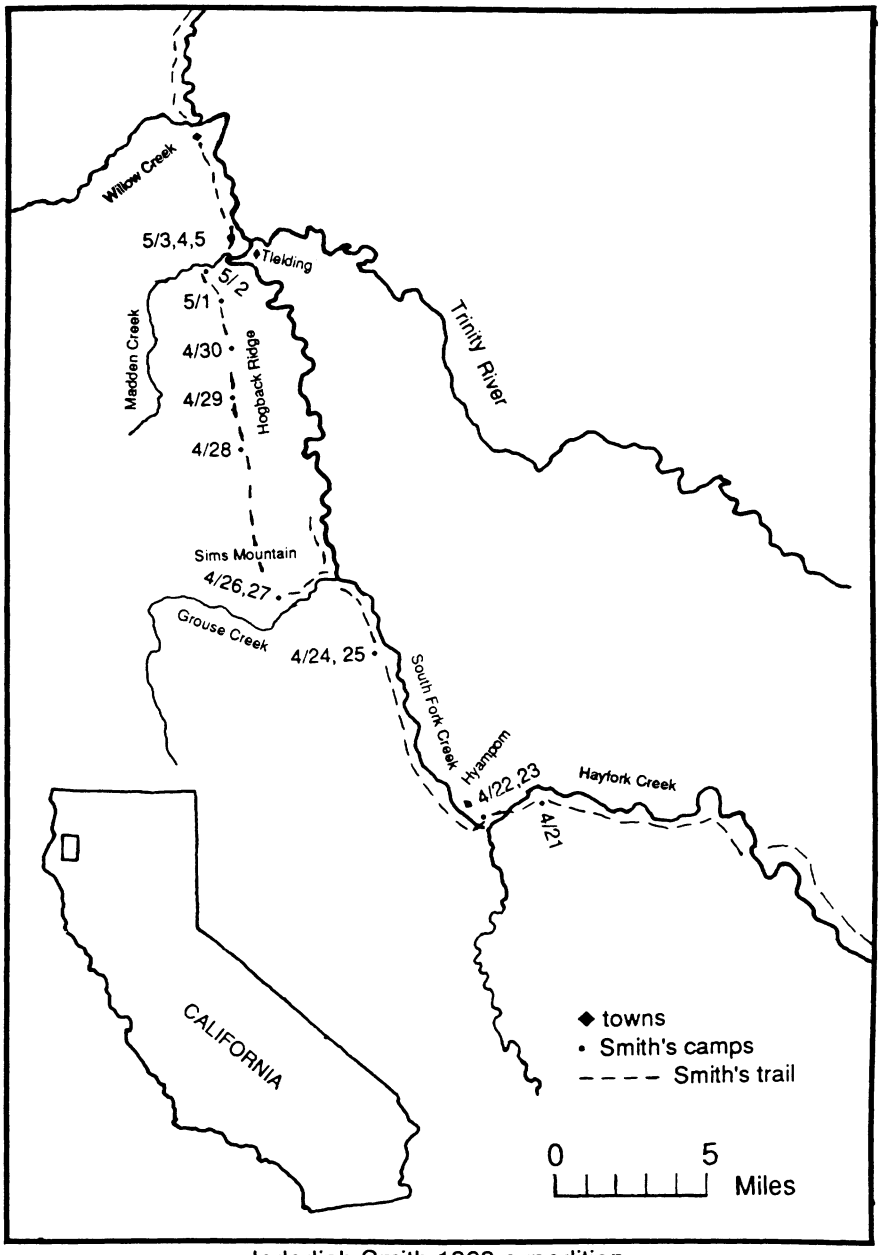
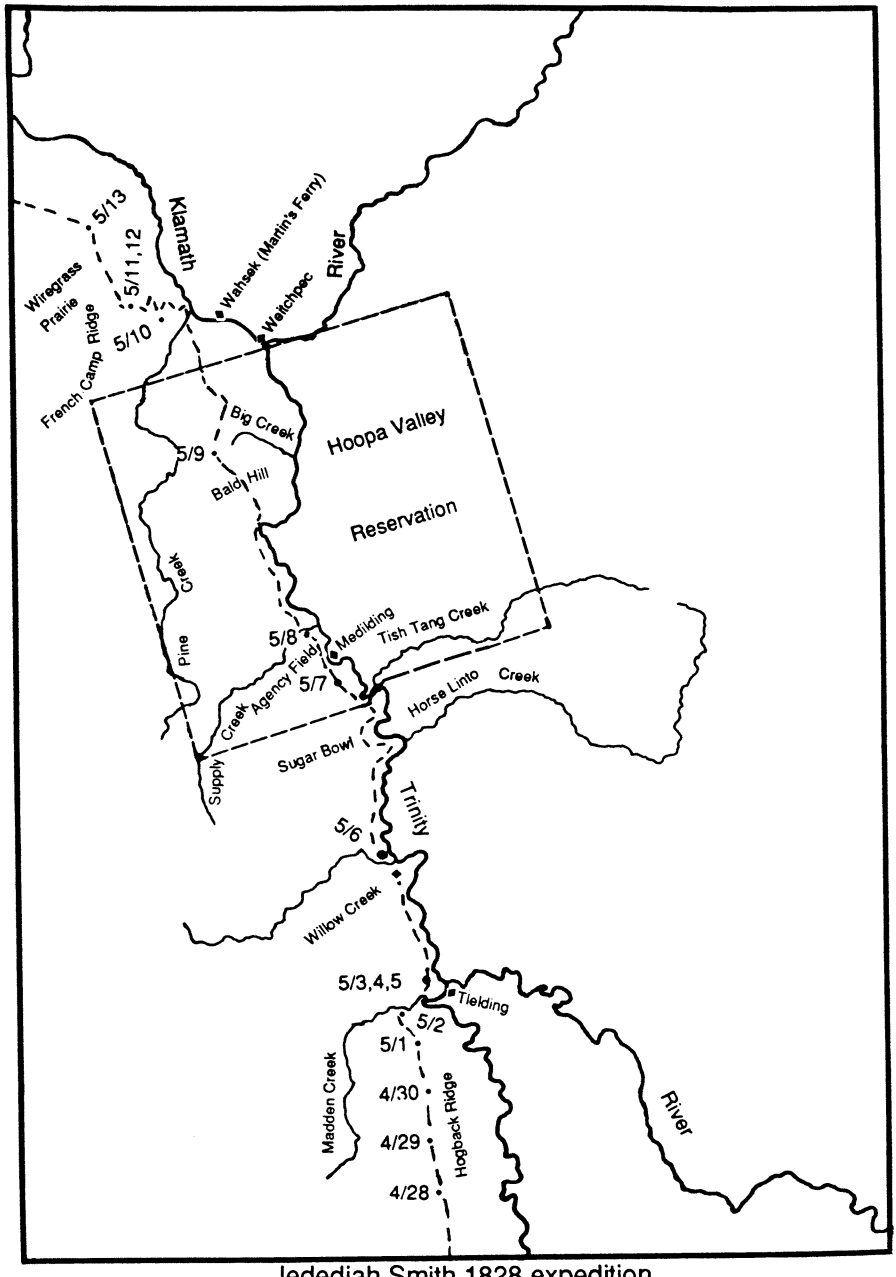


Jedediah Smith 1828 expedition
along the South Fork of the Trinity River, California



Jedediah Smith 1828 expedition
through Hoopa Valley, California