things over to pay them. When they carried over
enough, they all stopped crying, and all were
friends again. They visited and said, "Now we are
friends." Then they ate, and had a big time. If
they didn't give enough payment, they fought.

When payment was insufficient and they decided
to fight, a ceremonial dance was first held at
Me'ass-e-ah. Two headmen and the shaman danced and
sang for an hour or so, praying for the success
of the undertaking. During the actual fighting
they came within arrow's range and spread out in
a loose line. They jumped about to dodge the ar-
rows. Nora said that usually few people were
killed in an intertribal war, not more than four
or five, but many were killed when they fought
with the Centerville (Wiyot) people, because
"they always had trouble with them anyway."

A victory dance was held at Me'ass-e-ah follow-
ing success in war. Two headmen danced and sang
when the whole tribe assembled. Scals were not
taken. Each side was permitted to search the
battlefield for the dead and wounded without
molestation. The slain were carried home by
friends and buried with regular observances.

War weapons were chiefly bows and arrows and
double-edged stone knives. Clubs of hardwood with
heavy pointed heads were used for hand-to-hand
encounters. They also threw rocks by hand and
were said to be able to throw with the speed of
a bullet.

According to Nora, the Bear River were more
peaceful than the surrounding tribes, and war
was infrequent, but they sometimes aided the Mat-
tole in their disputes with the Sinkoyne and
Wiyot. One war with the Sinkoyne, at Upper Mat-
tole, was brought on because both Sinkoyne and
Mattole claimed the discoverer's right to a whale
which had washed onto the beach south of Center-
ville, in the Bear River territory. The Bear
River people aided the Mattole in that war as
well as in other wars with the Wiyot and whites.
They did not, generally, unite with the Mattole
in their disputes with the Briceland and
Shelter Cove people (Sinkoyne). They considered
such wars as of a private nature and of no con-
cern to the Bear River people.

The next most frequent cause for war was in-
jury by her husband to a woman's brothers or male
cousins. The following tale related by Nora il-
lustrated this point clearly.

A man from Briceland married a Bear River
woman. He went away for two or three days, tell-
ing her he was going to hunt deer. He went to
Bear river and drowned his little brother-in-law.
Bear River men tracked him. They sent another
of the wife's brothers to Briceland and he told
her. He told her not to cry or let her husband
know that she knew anything about the murder, but
to bring her husband on a visit to her parents.
He also told her to carry her little baby her-
sell so that nothing could happen to it. Then the
brother went back to Davis creek and they made an
ambush for the husband. The woman did just as her

brother told her. She and her husband went to
Bear river to visit her parents and when they
passed Davis creek, the people met them there and
killed the man. The woman lived with her people
after that. Briceland people were going to fight
the Davis Creek people, but when the chief heard
what the man had done, he said, "That's right, we
cannot kill people because that man was bad."

Bear River people had one serious war with the
Wiyot. As the result of a personal grievance, a
Davis Creek man killed a Wiyot. The latter re-
taliated by stealthily entering Bear River territ-
ory, slaughtering the sleeping people, and throw-
ing their bodies into Davis creek. The survivors
made war on the Wiyot and killed about twenty be-
fore a money settlement was arranged.

Nora said the only trouble her people had with
the whites was caused by Redwood Indians (Whilkut)
stealing and killing the whites' cattle at Hydes-
ville. The whites retaliated by raiding a dance
at Blue Lake and killing the guilty and innocent
alike. Most of the Bear River people were attend-
ing and consequently were slaughtered. The sur-

vivors were driven to the Smith River reservation
by the soldiers from the military garrison at
Buckport.

TRADE

Trade was principally with the Hupa, even
though they were the farthest removed from the
Bear River country. However, Bear River people
traded with all their neighbors to a greater or
lesser degree. There was a well-known trail lead-
ing to the Hupa and their neighbors— from the
mouth of Bear river northward over the present
Wildcat Ridge road, thence easterly through Monu-
ment and the intervening Wiyot and Nongati terri-

tory. Sporadic commerce with the Sinkoyne was


on over the Mattole trade route, but such
trade was slight and did not extend on to the
Lassik and Wailaki territory. There seems to have
been an antipathy between the Lassik and Bear
River people. Lassik people were said to have
killed traders on the slightest provocation.

Journeys were made on foot and trade goods
transported on the back. With the Hupa they traded
angelica root, wild tobacco obtained from the Mat-
tole river (considered very superior), abalone
shell, and various foodstuffs, receiving in ex-
change hill grass with which to make rope and
carved pine nuts for beads; with the Wiyot they
traded abalone shell, wild tobacco, and foodstuffs
in exchange for canoes and other foodstuffs. How-
ever, trade must have been limited by the fact
that the tribes had many articles in common. The
principal localized products were wild tobacco on
the Mattole river and the Hupa pine-nut beads.
Black and red obsidian money was common to the
whole area.

According to Nora, "We did not trade with the
Covelo (Wailaki) people and but little with the