EXPLORING AND SETTLING HUMBOLDT BAY

by

Jamie L. Bush

Approved by the Master’s Project Committee:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rod Sievers</td>
<td>Committee Chair</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delores McBroome</td>
<td>Committee Member</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gayle Olson-Raymer</td>
<td>Committee Member</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delores McBroome</td>
<td>Graduate Coordinator</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MASS – Teaching American History Cohort</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donna E. Schafer</td>
<td>Dean for Research and Graduate Studies</td>
<td>May, 2005</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ABSTRACT

Exploration of the Humboldt Bay Area

Jamie L. Bush

Humboldt Bay is tucked away in redwood country at the northern end of California. Since its only entrance was hard to see and maneuver through, it was not explored nor used by anyone other than the members of the local Native American nations until 1806. The history of the Humboldt Bay area is reflected in the fact that explorers tend to be motivated by three things: the opportunity for financial gain, to convert others to their religion, and/or for adventure.

This project will provide information on how the Bay’s own geography slowed European and white American exploration of the region. This fact is due mostly to the Bay’s natural opening from the ocean at only 3000 to 3500 feet wide, and its high water area at 24 square miles and the low water area at around 13 square miles. It will show why people came to this area, in what order they arrived, and how exploration of Humboldt Bay by the Americans, as related by Owen C. Coy in The Humboldt Bay region 1850-1875, brought about social and economic changes to the Humboldt Bay region for the white settlers as well as the American Indians. This project will examine the claims made by the British, Spanish, Russians and Americans. It will show in 1805, the American ship the O’Cain, under Captain Jonathan Winship sailed along the
California coast to hunt sea otter. After Winship and the O’Cain came the ship the Laura Virginia with E. H. Howard and H. H. Buhne who were the first recorded white Americans to enter Humboldt Bay. Overland came the Josiah Gregg party in search of a water route from the Pacific to the gold mines which eventually lead to the settlements of Union Town, Bucksport, and Eureka.

Humboldt Bay’s exploration is often neglected in local classrooms due to a lack of classroom ready resources and the emphasis on the national story. However the story of white exploration of Humboldt Bay illustrates the larger American story such as the conflict and cultural exchanges between natives and American settlers, the economic and political motives of Manifest Destiny that “. . . bolstered a sense of national superiority and an expansionist mentality (Jeffrey Nash, The American People: Creating a Nation and a Society), and the settling and economic development of the western frontier. In this project I will make these connections to the larger American story.

This project will provide an eighth grade lesson that will incorporate a description of the various groups that came to the Humboldt Bay area, and those that called Humboldt Bay their home in the first half of the 19th century. Also the geography of the physical environment and the development of their economic lives will be covered. Students will explore why Humboldt Bay was an important resource for those who settled here. They will also discover how the timber, shipbuilding, and fishing industries developed by those early settlers shaped the Humboldt Bay region’s economy of today. All of these topics will reflect the main theme of the unit that explorers tend to be
motivated by three things: the opportunity for financial gain, to convert others to their
religion, and/or for adventure. Finally, students will understand how the local history of
Humboldt Bay fits in with California State Standard 8.8.2: describe the purpose,
challenges, and economic incentives associated with westward expansion, including
Manifest Destiny and the territorial acquisitions that spanned numerous decades; and
California State Standard 8.12.1: trace patterns of agricultural and industrial development
as they relate to climate, use of natural resources, markets, and trade and locate such
development on a map.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE OF CONTENTS</td>
<td>vi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LITERATURE REVIEW: EXPLORING &amp; SETTLING HUMBOLDT BAY</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who Was First?</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why Did They Come?</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What Was The Impact?</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCLUSION</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LESSON PLAN</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior Content Knowledge and Skills</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion of Content Hook</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson Content</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Winship Chart of Humboldt Bay .......................................................... 66
APPENDIX B: Wiyot Settlements ............................................................................. 67
APPENDIX C: Humboldt Bay Explorers and Settlers ........................................... 68
APPENDIX D: Industries ......................................................................................... 69
APPENDIX E: L. K. Wood Journal ......................................................................... 70
APPENDIX F: Humboldt Indian Map Quiz ............................................................. 71
INTRODUCTION

What drew people to this northwest corner of California? Instead of “if you build it, they will come”\(^1\); it was if you find it, they will come. What was “it”? Humboldt Bay was “it”. When and why did people want to find and settle Humboldt Bay? For American Indians, the why is answered in traditional beliefs. For Europeans and white Americans, the big picture is Manifest Destiny -- the idea that civilized people were entitled to all the elbowroom they could claim. The most desirable elbowroom was the land that could yield a profit. This concept called Manifest Destiny, then, is driven by the well-known concept of money. In his 1993 book on California, *Little White Father*, Ray Raphael suggests that California was valued because of “the greed and self interest of an expansionist civilization”.\(^2\) Besides the economic factors, white Americans also believed that it was their patriotic duty to help expand their country from coast to coast. Manifest Destiny allowed them to serve their country by establishing a hold on the North American continent from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean.

Adventure also attracted people to Humboldt. Adventure seekers wanted to explore and settle what they saw as the untamed western expanse of the North America frontier. In addition, many of the explorers and settlers that came west of the Mississippi

\(^1\) *Field of Dreams*. Directed and screenplay written by Phil Robinson. Universal Studios, 1989. Film  
River were European immigrants or ancestors of Europeans who came from a tradition of the high status of land ownership. Primarily it was royalty and the upper classes that owned the land in Europe. To the immigrants of the United States, land meant wealth. The opening of the Western Frontier allowed the poorest people to claim large tracts of land. In turn, this gave them a feeling of being on the same footing as the wealthy classes. It expanded their self-image and raised their standing in society.

The big question of who was first yields more controversy than the why. Historians agree that the American Indians were in the Humboldt County area first. However, when discussing the “discovery” of Humboldt Bay, historical descriptions of its explorers and settlers mention the native inhabitants in very small blurbs, if at all. The controversy, then, arises from which white people were first in Humboldt County. From as far back as the sixteenth century, European explorers searched along the present day western coast of the United States for a proper and protective port. There were claims made by the Spanish, Russians, British, and Americans. Each of these nations had the same desire to acquire new lands to expand the empires of their homelands. Furthermore, they wanted to gain absolute financial control over the trapping and trading industries. Finding a suitable natural port would make attaining territory and economic dominance much easier. A Pacific port would supply a place to conduct business and ship the fur products to their destinations.

The search for such a protective port on the northwest coast of present-day California was not as easy to find as the explorers hoped. Despite the fact that Humboldt
Bay would become the heart of Humboldt County, the entrance to Humboldt Bay itself was not inviting to new explorers and inhabitants. In fact, not only did the dimensions of the Bay and its entrance discourage exploration, it seemed to protect and isolate Humboldt’s aboriginal population.

The area now known as Humboldt County is virtually landlocked on three sides by mountains that were difficult to traverse by early adventurers. Access into Humboldt from the Pacific Ocean possibly held the easiest path in. Though sailing into Humboldt Bay might have been less rugged than going by land, it was not exactly an easy access.

Humboldt Bay is the largest enclosed bay along the two hundred fifteen miles of California coastline above San Francisco Bay. It has the appearance of a lagoon, which is defined by local commercial fisherman Mike Zamboni as a brackish body of water separated by a sand spit that occasionally breaks open to the ocean.\(^3\) The width of Humboldt Bay is as small as half a mile in some places and as far as four miles in others. Its average length is fourteen miles. It is separated from the Pacific Ocean by sand dunes from one-eighth to one mile wide. The Bay has several small islands in it. The two largest of these islands are now called Woodley Island and Indian Island. The streams that drain into it are small and include Jacoby and Salmon Creek, Freshwater and Ryan Slough, and Elk River.\(^4\) Before the jetties were built, the original natural inlet to the Bay varied in size from 3000 to 3500 feet wide. A wave that averages fifteen feet breaking through the

\(^3\) Mike Zamboni. Interview by author. McKinleyville, California, 22 November 2004.

Bay’s entrance has the force of over sixty thousand horsepower. If this amount of power could be contained, it could supply electric power for fifty thousand houses. For centuries this unusual entrance made Humboldt Bay practically invisible to Europeans and white Americans sailing by the North Coast.\(^5\)

At its deepest spot, the Bay is thirty-eight feet. At low tide it is almost thirteen square miles. At high tide, it is approximately twenty-four square miles.\(^6\) In a twenty-four hour span of time, the Bay succumbs to an enormous movement of water during the tidal cycle. The gravitational pull from the moon can force up to two hundred fifty billion cubic yards of water from the ocean through the Bay’s two-thirds of a mile wide entrance. This amount of water would stretch the two hundred fifty eight thousand, eight hundred fifty seven miles between the earth and the moon five times over if it were poured into five-gallon containers.\(^7\)

At a speed of up to five knots during an outgoing tide, the Bay loses twelve million tons of water every hour. This rate could fill more than three thousand Olympic size pools in about five minutes. The action of an extreme minus tide can lower the Bay level by ten feet and more than half of its size. Previous to the construction of the jetties, this force of water would move the entrance to the Bay a mile and a half in either direction. In addition, as waves approach the Bay from the west, and tides flow out to the east, currents are running parallel to the coast. These currents, disturbed by the shifting

\(^6\) Coy, *Humboldt Bay Region*, 7.
\(^7\) Gates, *Night Crossings*, 125.
winds, caused sailing through Humboldt Bay’s coastal waters treacherous. The dominant northwest winds move the currents to run to the south. Conversely, winds originating from the south push the currents to flow north. Colliding currents create upwellings that cause the sea water to become a churning mass. The currents also bring discharged sand and silt from the Mad and Eel rivers to the Bay during the continuous winter rains. The tides, then, move the sand and silt into the Bay, causing visibility in the Bay to be reduced to as little as two feet.⁸

The European and white American explorers who sailed up and down the Pacific side of the North and South American continents had to face the relentless winds from the northwest. These winds could send ships hundreds of miles south of their plotted course, or even out towards the middle of the Pacific. When the weather warms over the land to the east of Humboldt, fog will set in. As this warmer eastern air rises and meets the cooler coastal air that sits over a hundred miles west of the coast in the Pacific during summer, fog is created. Besides the fog that hugged the coast, sailors were forced to keep a safe distance from shore due to the dangerously rocky coastline. Because the average exploration ship did not sit high in the sea, the view of Humboldt Bay was hidden by the sand dunes that separated it from the ocean even on a clear day. The entrance also deceived anyone looking in the direction of the Bay because the waves breaking into it appeared the same shape and size as those waves breaking on the northern and southern sand spits. From just a short distance from the coastline, the bluffs east of the Bay that are

the current site of King Salmon, gave the illusion that the dunes fed directly into the higher ground, Europeans and white Americans continued to pass by Humboldt Bay until the start of the nineteenth century.\textsuperscript{9}

\textsuperscript{9} Walter C. Schafran, \textit{The Northwest Coast of California and Humboldt Bay: Seen by Few – Missed by Many}, (Arcata: Center for Community Development, 1983), 2.
LITERATURE REVIEW: EXPLORING & SETTLING HUMBOLDT BAY

Who Was First?

The American Indians were obviously using Humboldt Bay and living around it first. These original inhabitants include the Wiyot, Yurok, Karok, Hupa, Chilula, Whilkut, Nongatl, Lassik, Sinkyoue, Mattole, Wailaki, Wintun, Kuneste Group, and Chimariko. However, Cheryl Seidner, the Tribal Chairperson of the Wiyot Table Bluff Reservation, observes in an online interview that the Yurok, Karok, Wiyot and Hupa are the only groups living in Humboldt County today. The northern extent of the Wiyot lands stretched from the mouth of the river they called Batawat, or Mad River, to just east of the current site of the town of Blue Lake. The southern boundary ended about ten miles south of the Eel River, at Bear River, and inland to the fork of the Van Duzen River. The Wiyot name for the Bear River is Chwaregdachitl. Wiki was the Wiyot name for Humboldt Bay. The twenty known Wiyot settlements were either near the Bay or a stream. At the time of the European and white American contact, the Wiyot were divided into three main groups. In the north were the patewa’t settlements on the lower Mad River. On Humboldt Bay was the wiki’, and the wi’yat was near the Eel River. 10 The white settlers called this group of American Indians the Wiyot after the name they had for the Eel River. This territory was well established when the Europeans and

white Americans arrived. The Yurok lived north of the Wiyot, along the coast and from the mouth of the Klamath River inland to Weitchpec. The Karok occupied the area of the Klamath River northeast of Weitchpec. The Hupa could be found along both the Trinity and Klamath rivers. The territory of the Chilula covered Bald Hills and most of Redwood Creek. South of the Chilula was the Whilkut who lived along the upper Mad River and Redwood Creek. Farther south was the small group known as the Nongatl. The Lassik made their settlements on the eastern part Eel River, and on the South Fork of the Eel River was the Sinkyone. The Kuneste Group claimed the land along the Eel River and above the Van Duzen River. The Mattole territory covered the coast south of the Wiyot and along the Bear and Mattole rivers. Located along the southeastern border of Humboldt County was the Wailaki. The largest group in Northern California, the Wintun, only claimed a small triangle in the southeast part of Humboldt County. The Chimariko occupied a small piece of land north of the Wintun triangle.

The Wiyot creator’s name is Gatswokwire, also known as Gurugudatrigakwitl or ku rateri kakwit, which means That Old Man Above. He existed before the world did, and then made the world. The Wiyot belief about the creation of the world, as told by Kyle Diesner and Sean Bertsch in History of the Wiyot People, is:

[e]verything was water. Gurugudatrigakwitl thought “It is bad. There is no land, but all water.” That is why he made this earth. He took a little dust

and blew it. Then there was land all about. He looked over it and nobody was there....He thought: “I will make some one to be about.” He made a man. His name was Chkekowik. When He was finished He let him go. He gave him bow and arrow. It did not look well to Gurugudatrigakwitl to see the man going about alone. He thought again and said: “I will make another one.” Then he made a woman. When she was grown he let her go and gave her to the man to go with him. Then they went together, the man first, the woman behind. Therefore women follow men. Then Gurugudatrigakwitl thought: “What will he kill to eat?” Then He made elk for him. He made two female elk and a bull elk. Then Chkekowik saw them. He thought “There are elk; I will kill them.” Gurugudatrigakwitl gave them to him to kill and he thought: “I will kill them.” Just as boys want to kill everything they see, so Chkekowik was. Gurugudatrigakwitl made all fishes, birds, and animals. He had them covered up in a round basket, dalitlen. He took them out one by one, set them down, and they ran off.14

Kroeber states that He also made acorns boats, string, utensils, dances, and the weather. While He wandered around the earth, Gurugudatrigakwitl rescued salmon from their jealous owner. He made all of these things by just thinking. He also made it possible for mothers to give birth without dying. The Wiyot, Kroeber says, believe that Gurugudatrigakwitl will exist as long as the world exists.15

Before the coming of white settlers, the Wiyot found the Humboldt Bay area a highly desirable place to live. It was sufficient to provide them with all the resources they needed. There was food such as deer, mountain lions, elk, acorns, berries, roots, clams from the bay, and salmon and eel from the rivers. The Wiyot used deerskin to make moccasins and the men’s breechcloths. Women wore grass skirts adorned with local shells and beads. Their redwood houses were rectangular and had pitched roofs and

chimneys. They used redwood logs to make dugout canoes. They also traded canoes to the Mattole for abalone. The Wiyot were understood by Europeans and white Americans to be friendly and generous. On their website Laura Redish and Lewis Orrin observe that the Wiyot had very positive relationships with the white settlers and explorers up until the gold rush of California caused their territory to be stampeded by fortune seekers and settlers looking to exploit the miners for financial gain. Before this there was no need for the Wiyot to leave their territory except to trade with others.16

In The Humboldt Bay Region 1850-1875, Owen C. Coy states that “no account of the . . . [Humboldt] region would be complete without at least a brief description of the native population which was in possession of the land at the time the white race began to settle there.” While Coy credits the American Indians for being first in the area, he only feels that a “brief description” is required, showing his bias that while their existence was a fact it is of little importance. Chad Hoopes, in his book Lure of Humboldt Bay Region, makes almost no mention of the American Indians other than acknowledging their presence when they “harassed seamen”.18

Coy cites George Davidson’s conclusion that the Englishman Sir Francis Drake must have been the first European to discover Humboldt Bay. He asserts that Drake found Humboldt Bay during his travels in the Pacific Ocean in 1578. His argument is that

17 Coy, Humboldt Bay Region, 12.
Drake sailed north after he heaped treasures on the *Golden Hind* stolen from Spanish ships and settlements along the South American Pacific coast. He sailed north to find a safe route home that would avoid a confrontation with the Spanish he had raided. During a storm off the coast of present day Oregon, Drake anchored in what the Englishman called a “bad bay”. Coy believes this to be Chetko Cove, Oregon. Coy claims that this cove did not provide enough protection for Drake’s ship the *Golden Hind*, therefore Drake charted a course south looking for a better place to wait out the storm. Coy also cites H. R. Wagner, a historian who reported that the *Golden Hind* took shelter in Trinidad Bay in June of 1579. On page 19 of his book, Coy says that “although in the absence of more definite information we can form no positive conclusions, we are forced to consider seriously the suggestion that Drake was the first European explorer to discover the Humboldt coast.” This waffling on Drake shows that Coy doubts that Drake noticed Humboldt’s large bay. The only other English explorer that Coy makes note of is Captain George Vancouver. Coy notes that Vancouver made it to Trinidad Bay in 1793, but, probably because of bad weather, was not able to see Humboldt Bay.19

Hoopes supports Owen Coy’s argument that Sir Francis Drake was the first European to find the Humboldt region and anchor in Trinidad Bay in June of 1579. Hoopes also quotes George Davidson who believes that

Drake . . . from the masthead . . . may have seen the extensive waters of Humboldt Bay over the narrow and comparatively low sand dunes near the entrance, but he certainly could not determine the entrance, because at

the very opening between the low sand pits it is masked by the bright face of a Red Bluff, 96 feet high. . . \(^2^0\)

Hoopes makes a brief statement that the Englishman, George Vancouver, was more than likely too far out to sea to be able to catch a glimpse of Humboldt Bay during his exploration of the California coast in 1792.\(^2^1\) Virginia Sparks, in her study titled *Indian Island*, concludes that Humboldt Bay was not visited or viewed by any European explorer from the last half of the 1500s through Vancouver.\(^2^2\)

Coy next documents the domination of the Spanish in exploring the Pacific between the years 1542 and 1800. Coy seems to be quite certain that, although the Spanish were off the coast of Humboldt, they did not explore or enter its bay. He chronicles the 1542 voyage of Don Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo who brought the ships the *La Vittoria* and the *San Salvador* north from Navidad, Mexico. While trying to maneuver in stormy weather, Cabrillo sustained an injury that he died from. Bartolome Ferrelo took command of the expedition according to Coy. However, Ferrelo decided to turn back due to the rough weather. Coy claims that the Spanish did not attempt to sail toward the northwest coast of California again until the eighteenth century when they learned that the English and Russians were investigating it. Coy reports that Don Bruno de Heceta and Don Juan Francisco de la Bodega y Quadra sailed the *Sonora* and the *Santiago* for Spain from San Blas, Mexico. They recorded that they saw an enclosed body of water that Coy believes to most likely have been Humboldt Bay. They continued north and on

\(^{2^0}\) Hoopes, *Lure of Humboldt*, 4-5.
\(^{2^1}\) Ibid., 9.
June 9, 1775, anchored in present day Trinidad Bay. Heceta and Bodega stayed for more than a week and would claim the harbor along with the land surrounding it for Charles III, the king of Spain. The Spanish named this small harbor that was protected by a large rock Trinidad Bay because June 9 happened to be Trinity Sunday. On the rock that towers some 383 feet above the bay, now called Trinidad Head, they placed a large, wooden cross. In 1913 several women who lived in Trinidad replaced the wooden cross with a granite cross. The original cross had almost been destroyed from the wind and rain. The granite cross is still on Trinidad Head, facing the Pacific Ocean. Because the Spanish barely made mention of Humboldt Bay, Coy deduces that they probably thought it was an enclosed and unusable harbor.²³

When it comes to the Spanish, Hoopes adds to Coy’s accounts with the description of the Spanish Viceroy of New Spain, Don Antonio Mendoza, who organized expeditions to explore the coastal lands on the east side of the Pacific Ocean. Hoopes states that the Spaniards sailed by the Bay on their travels along Pacific North America in 1542. He even agrees with Coy that the Spanish did sail up to the forty-second parallel but then turned around due to bad weather. Hoopes also observes that in November of 1595, Sebastian Rodriguez Cermenò sailed from Manila to California. Hoopes says that according to Spanish Voyages to the Northwest Coast of America, by H.R. Wagner, Cermenò found Trinidad Bay but did not locate Humboldt Bay.²⁴ Hoopes mentions that the Spanish frigate, the Tres Reyes, tried to sail into the mouth of the Eel River in 1602,

²³ Coy, Humboldt Bay Region, 17-23.
²⁴ Hoopes, Lure of Humboldt, 5.
but was unsuccessful because the current was too strong. Although, from the description
the *Tres Reyes* gave, Hoopes claims there is a small chance they attempted to enter
Humboldt Bay.\textsuperscript{25} Hoopes says that the *Tres Reyes* reported that they had

\[
\ldots \text{found a large bay at } 40^\circ 50' \text{ into which a large river emptied.}\n\]
Humboldt Bay at $40^\circ 45'$ does not have a large river feeding it but several
small rivers that could appear large during a heavy rainy season. The
latitude is within reason, but the plausible deduction, using the report of
the ship’s officer, is that the *Tres Reyes* attempted to ascend the Eel River
at $40^\circ 39'$.\textsuperscript{26}

Hoopes and Clarence Pearsall, in *The Quest for Qual-A-Wa-Loo*, repeat Coy’s assertion
that Heceta and Bodega spotted Humboldt Bay but did not attempt to enter the Bay
because they could not find an entrance.\textsuperscript{27} Hoopes also notes on page 2 of his book the
story of Heceta and Bodega anchoring in a small bay that they named Trinidad in 1775.
Furthermore, in *The Northwest Coast of California and Humboldt Bay: Seen by Few –
Missed by Many*, Walter C. Schafran insists that “[a]lthough explorers and traders from
as far back as the sixteenth century passed along the shores of what is now Humboldt
County, it wasn’t until the year 1806 that Jonathan Winship, an American sea captain,
accidentally came upon the entrance to Humboldt Bay.”\textsuperscript{28}

Coy supports the claim of Captain Jonathan Winship’s log that in the year 1806
his crew found and sailed into Humboldt Bay. Coy calls this first half of the nineteenth

\textsuperscript{25} Hoopes, *Lure of Humboldt*, 6.
\textsuperscript{26} Ibid., 6-7.
\textsuperscript{28} Schafran, *The Northwest Coast*, 2.
century up to 1846 “. . . the period of exploration of the fur traders”.

In fact, the reason Captain Winship was off the Humboldt coast was to hunt sea otters. In passing, Coy states that the American fur trading ship, the *Lelia Byrd*, set anchor in Trinidad Bay in 1804, but did not venture further south. Hoopes, however, does believe that the *Lelia Byrd* passed Humboldt Bay, after leaving Trinidad where they “. . . were forced to kill several [Indians] in self defense. . . but [paid] no attention as though [Humboldt Bay] did not exist.”

Coy maintains that Winship brought the first white Americans to lay eyes on the Bay. He states that in 1805 Winship persuaded the head of the Russian-American Company, Alexander Baranof, to allow him to take a group of Aleut Indians in his crew south to search for sea otters along what is now northern California. Winship agreed to split the profits of this endeavor equally between the Russian-American Company and himself. Besides hunting for fur themselves, Coy notes that the crew under Winship traded with the natives around Trinidad Bay for various types of fur and also for strawberries and raspberries. Coy argues that Winship’s party entered the Bay when he returned in 1806. The evidence that Coy uses to support this theory that someone from Winship’s crew took a longboat and investigated Humboldt’s hidden bay is from page 29 of his book that quotes the ship’s log and describes:

> . . . [that] eight and a half miles from the port of Trinidad is found the entrance to the Bay of Indians . . . . This bay has not been carefully described, but is known that it is of considerable size; and somewhat resembles the Bay of San Francisco, except that the entrance to

---

29 Coy, *Humboldt Bay Region*, 17.
it for vessels of large class is not convenient, and with strong southwest winds is even impassable for any kind of vessel.\(^{31}\)

Although it is fairly clear that Winship’s party located Humboldt Bay and mapped it (See Appendix A), Coy does not make a solid case that they sailed into it. He does, however, put forth the fact that there is no definitive report of any European or white American exploring or sailing into Humboldt Bay between Winship’s arrival in 1806 until the Josiah Gregg party almost forty-four years later.\(^{32}\)

Again Hoopes concurs with Coy that Jonathan Winship was the first to map Humboldt Bay during June of 1806. He seems to have almost no doubt compared to Coy that “[t]he honor of being known as the first seaman to enter Humboldt Bay belongs to the American sea captain, Jonathan Winship.”\(^{33}\) He does add that Winship named, explored, and mapped Big Lagoon. Hoopes builds on Coy’s statement that Winship traded with the American Indians at Trinidad, but that after some cordial trading he contends the local natives became suddenly hostile. Then Hoopes expresses the belief that Winship “. . .piloted the O’Cain over the bar [of Humboldt Bay], turned north up the channel and anchored at the south end of an island. . .”\(^{34}\) He insists this island was Indian Island. Hoopes also notes that while in the Bay, Winship’s crew were not welcome by the native inhabitants because they “. . .destroyed the sea otter in the bay, . . .disturbed the

\(^{31}\) Coy, *Humboldt Bay Region*, 29.
\(^{32}\) Ibid., 27-29.
\(^{34}\) Ibid., 11.
geese and ducks, and . . . annoyed the clam diggers.”[^35] Obviously, Hoopes has no doubt that Winship guided the *O'Cain* into Humboldt Bay in 1806.

David Anderson, for the *Times-Standard* in February of 1996, reports that two Aleut Indians from the *O'Cain* spotted Humboldt Bay on June 6, 1806 at seven in the morning. He goes on to quote Winship’s logbook that states an entrance to the Bay was located at 40°47’ North latitude, and “the Humboldt Bar Pilots Association records Humboldt Bay’s entrance to be 40°46’ north, which is proof that Captain Winship’s [calculation] for a bay that would be known as Humboldt Bay in 1850.”[^36] In *Redwood Country*, Lynwood Carranco declares that Winship called the entrance to Humboldt Bay “Rezanov” after the Russian Imperial Chamberlain, Alexander Rezanov, and called the Bay “Bay of Indians”.[^37] Warren Heckrotte, in his study *The Discovery of Humboldt Bay: A New Look at an Old Story*, raises the possibility that the Bay was not discovered at all by Europeans until 1806 by Winship. He also notes the report by the Russian Hydrographic Department that claims the Russian American Company’s fur traders discovered the Bay in 1807.[^38]

Coy calls the years following his fur trader period, the time of the “. . . invasion by the Americans in their search for gold deposits and lands suitable for settlement.”[^39]

When it seemed inevitable that California was to become a state, Coy notes that interest

[^38]: Warren Heckrotte, *The Discovery of Humboldt Bay: A New Look at an Old Story*, (Berkeley: University of California, no date given), 31.
again was sparked to investigate the more isolated parts of coastal California north of San Francisco. In passing he mentions Jedediah Smith who traveled west from the Sacramento Valley to where the Trinity River originates. From there Coy emphasizes Smith followed the Trinity River to the Klamath River. This river brought him to the coast. Because Smith followed the Klamath River, Coy insists that he would not have gone by Humboldt Bay.\footnote{Coy, \textit{Humboldt Bay Region}, 36.}

Contradicting Coy’s theory of Smith’s travels, Wallace Elliot, in \textit{History of Humboldt County, California with Illustrations}, proposes that Smith:

\begin{quote}
. . . must have visited Humboldt Bay. [He] could not have well avoided it . . . After reaching the mouth of the Russian River, it is . . . probable they followed the coast or attempted to do so. Their business would have led them to some stream bearing north; so we will suppose they reached the head-waters of Eel River, and thus followed down that stream to the ocean, and thence to Humboldt Bay.\footnote{Wallace W. Elliot, \textit{History of Humboldt County, California with Illustrations}, (San Francisco: Wallace W. Elliot and Company Publishers, 1882), 81.}
\end{quote}

Originally, Coy notes, the physician Josiah Gregg, came west from Missouri during the rush for gold not only for financially gain, but also for the opportunity to conduct scientific research. Gregg was fascinated by the possibility for adventure and exploration of the natural environment. Coy details the expedition led by Gregg that set out on November 5, 1849, with eight men and enough provisions for ten days. From Lewis Keysor Wood’s own account in the \textit{California Traveler} of the Gregg expedition, those accompanying Gregg were “. . . Captain Thomas Seabring, of Ottawa, David A. Buck, of New York, J.B. Truesdell, of Oregon, James Van Duzen; Charles C. Southard of
Boston; Isaac Wilson, of Missouri, and L.K. Wood, of Kentucky.” Coy explains that the group reached the Pacific Ocean just south of the stream now known as Little River from which they journeyed north until they were stopped by the body of water now called Big Lagoon. Traveling south from the lagoon, the Gregg Party found Trinidad Head and named it Gregg’s Point after their leader. Next, Coy describes the incident that led to the naming of the large river that halted their progress. Coy quotes from the report that was written by L.K. Wood and relates that Gregg began to calculate the latitude of this river against the wishes of the rest of the party who felt it was more pressing to find a way to cross it. Eventually the group was able to get access to some canoes from some American Indians, probably Wiyot. The rest of the group was frustrated with the lagging Gregg and decided to cross the river without him if need be. At the last minute Gregg scrambled to get into one of the canoes, but was quite mad at not being allowed to finish his measurements. When they reached the other side of the river, Gregg:

opened [up] a perfect battery of the most withering and violent abuse . . . [using] such insulting language . . . that some in the party . . . came very near to inflicting upon . . . [him a] summary punishment by consigning him, instruments and all, to this beautiful river. Fortunately for the old gentleman, [calmer heads] . . . prevailed, and we were soon ready and off again. This stream, in commemoration of the difficulty . . . [was] called Mad River.

Next, Coy declares that the Gregg party continued south down the beach and made camp next to the bay that David Buck had found when searching for drinkable

---

44 Ibid., 41.
water. Coy reveals that they named it Trinity Bay because they assumed it was the body of water that they had seen on maps made by the Spanish. The Gregg group were told by some Native Americans that they could not continue down the beach because the bay’s entrance “was deeper than the trees growing on the peninsula were tall.”\(^{45}\) The group then back tracked around the northern end of the bay and camped on a high piece of land overlooking this end of the bay. Coy observes that when some of the Gregg party returned to this spot in April of 1850 with members from the Union Company, it was chosen to be the site for a town. The area received the title of Union Town, which was eventually shortened to Union. Now the town is called Arcata due to the March 20, 1860, act of the California Legislature that officially changed the name. Coy supports the claim that those who backed the name of Arcata insisted the word was the title given to the area by the American Indians.\(^ {46}\) Carranco takes this story further and says that some claimed that the American Indian word A-Ka-E-Ta meant “Sit-down-eat.” Another legend he describes is that when several American Indians came to a camp of some explorers, the explorers thought the natives were telling them they were looking for “Our Katie”, a native woman by the name of Katie. Carranco also cites a different story about how the name was changed to Arcata to avoid confusion with another town of the same name.”\(^ {47}\)

Coy contends this area was desirable because it was on a plateau, and the land around the plateau was estimated to be prime for agriculture and timber. More significant was that

\(^ {45}\) Wood, “Discovery of Humboldt County,” 11.
\(^ {46}\) Coy, *Humboldt Bay Region*, 42, 56, 59.
this spot on the north end of the bay was the closest point to the mining areas on the Trinity. Being closer meant the possibility of the development of successful points from where to ship goods to the mines.\textsuperscript{48}

Another member of the Gregg group, David Buck, lent his name to a site on the east side of the bay that was approximately five miles north and across the bay. In December of 1849, Buck carved his name on a tree at this location. Later this area became know as Buck’s Port, and eventually Bucksport. Now it is the area just west of the plateau where Fort Humboldt was located. Bucksport was successful, Coy insists, because it was placed on the primary channel of the bay and its entrance, making it an inevitable place for the shipping business. Another place that received its name from the Gregg party was the Van Duzen River. Coy states that the party rode up the Eel River in canoes they got from some American Indians. They made it up to the fork where the Eel River met another stream that they christened Van Duzen after one of their own members.\textsuperscript{49}

Coy ends his narration of the Gregg party with the tale of how the group split up at the Eel River due to a disagreement on which route would be best to take. Lewis K. Wood’s group decided to continue south along the coast. During the journey of the first group, Wood was crippled for life by a grizzly bear. However, Coy assures that sometime in February of 1850 they reached settlements in Sonoma County. The other party ran into more hardships such as near starvation. In fact, Coy reveals, Gregg himself became so

\textsuperscript{48} Coy, \textit{Humboldt Bay Region}, 56.  
\textsuperscript{49} Ibid., 42-43, 57.
weak from lack of food that he fell from his horse and died, presumably from starvation. He was buried near the current site of Clear Lake. On page twenty-four, Hoopes also describes the Josiah Gregg party and supports the idea that this group was next to make it to the Bay.

Coy ends his section on exploration with a discussion of the Americans who came by sea after the Gregg party returned with reports of their adventures. He begins with the expedition of the Cameo. Both Coy and Hoopes admit that some of the miners that had backed out on the original Gregg party in 1849, decided to find a sea route to Trinidad Bay in order to have access the mines on the Trinity River. The authors believe the ship the Cameo was in Trinidad Bay and the mouth of the Klamath River, but insist that the ship never located Humboldt Bay. Heckrotte also supports the idea that “. . .[t]here is no record of any ship entering Humboldt Bay until 1850.”

Next Coy devotes time to Lieutenant Douglas Ottinger who commanded the schooner Laura Virginia, a former participant in the slave trade. Coy reports that the ship left San Francisco on March 20, 1850, to explore the North Coast. Hoopes adds that the Laura Virginia was searching for a port to distribute goods to the mines on the Trinity River. Coy recounts how the Laura Virginia was not able to identify any landmarks along California’s coast due to fog until they reached the Eel River Valley. They gave the name of Ridge Point to the present day site of Table Bluff. Eventually they could make

---

50 Coy, Humboldt Bay Region, 43.
51 Ibid., 44-45.
52 Heckrotte, The Discovery of Humboldt, 39.
53 Hoopes, Lure of Humboldt, 25.
out over the sand dunes the bay but could not locate the entrance. Ottinger continued
north where he explored the mouth of the Klamath River and Redwood Creek. On the
fourth day of April, the *Laura Virginia* arrived in Trinidad Bay. Coy relates that Ottinger
sent a small group ashore under the leadership of E. H. Howard to search for the body of
water that they had seen from sea and presumed to be the bay. Coy describes how this
group’s progress was halted by Josiah Gregg’s Mad River on April 5. Again American
Indians from the rancheria across the river sent canoes over to the white men, who gave
the native inhabitants some gifts when they got to the other side. Later that afternoon, as
they continued down the beach, one of Howard’s lead scouts announced that he had
located the entrance to the bay. Coy claims that they camped on the site of the present
day Coast Guard Station just south of Samoa, and then returned to Trinidad the following
day. Ottinger was eager to try to enter this body of water, but also concerned about the
depth of the entrance. Hans H. Buhne was given the assignment to bring a small boat
through the bay’s entrance. Carranco adds that Buhne was from Denmark in 1822 and
came to California in 1847 aboard a whaling ship.\(^{54}\) Coy emphasizes that the *Laura
Virginia* entered the bay from the Pacific on April 14, 1850. Around this time, Carranco
observes that Buhne and Ottinger suggested that the Bay be named after Alexander von
Humboldt, a German scientist who was known for his explorations of South America.
Von Humboldt, says Carranco, was at this time “...at the height of his fame. In Europe
the name of Alexander von Humboldt...was only eclipsed by Napoleon. Darwin called

\(^{54}\) Carranco, *Redwood Country*, 17.
him the greatest scientific traveler that ever lived.” After the Laura Virginia entered the Bay, its members started to design a city across and slightly to the south from the entrance on the east shore of the Bay. They felt this site was ideal because it was so close to the Bay’s opening. They decided to name this settlement after von Humboldt also. Humboldt City was located where King Salmon is today.

The last explorer ship that Coy examines is the General Morgan. Samuel Brannon led this excursion. Coy alleges that Brannon later insisted that his expedition discovered Humboldt Bay before the Laura Virginia. Coy does agree that on April 5, 1850, the General Morgan was anchored off the mouth of a river that they named the Brannon River and is now called the Eel River. The next date he notes is April 12 when the General Morgan crew made their way to Trinidad by land. Coy proposes that Brannon and his party explored and mapped the Bay, but not before the crew of the Laura Virginia had spotted it from sea sometime before April 4. Coy also expresses the belief that the Ottinger party found the Bay on land on April 5. Unlike Coy, Hoopes does believe that on April 6 some of Brannon’s crew launched a small boat into Humboldt Bay from Brannon’s Bluff, now known as Table Bluff. In addition, Pearsall insists that several “. . . .Indians assisted . . . [the party from the General Morgan] to drag their boat about six or eight miles to a beautiful inlet now known as Humboldt Bay.” However, both Hoopes

55 Carranco, Redwood Country, 19.  
56 Coy, Humboldt Bay Region, 45, 54-55.  
57 Pearsall, Quest, 111.
and Pearsall maintain that the *General Morgan* did not sail into the Bay.\(^{58}\) On the other hand, Carranco expresses the belief that Brannon came upon the Bay on April 5.\(^ {59}\)

Andrew Genzoli, in *Redwood Country – legacy of the pioneer*, also contends that after mistaking the Eel River for the Trinity River on March 28 or 29, some of the men from the *General Morgan* were the first Americans to view the Bay after the Gregg party. A month after the *General Morgan* returned to San Francisco, Genzoli describes that some of her party, like James Ryan, Sam Brannon, Henry Wetherbee, and John Bluxome, turned around and went back to take part in settling Eureka.\(^ {60}\) Eureka was one of the last of the main Humboldt towns to be settled. The site for Eureka, Coy says, was coveted for its place on the Bay that appeared to be an ideal spot for shipping.\(^ {61}\) According to Genzoli, James Ryan, Eureka’s first mayor, was the one who designated the first streets of Eureka. These first streets ran from A to S streets, and from the waterfront to Sixteenth Street.\(^ {62}\) Carranco observes that the most widely accepted story for the naming of Eureka is credited to Ryan. When Ryan found a prairie that he thought was solid ground and would be perfect for a town, he exclaimed “Eureka, I have found a site!” The site of this prairie is assumed to be the area encompassing the present site of A to F streets, and from the Bay to Third Street. Carranco notes that “...the term Eureka, the Greek expression ...

\(^{60}\) Andrew Genzoli, *Redwood Country, legacy of the pioneer*, (Eureka: Schooner Features, 1973), 1, 12.  
\(^{61}\) Coy, *Humboldt Bay Region*, 47, 57-58.  
for ‘I have found it’, became very popular after the California Constitutional Convention of 1849 approved the great seal of the state with the inscription Eureka.

Why Did They Come?

When asked by Wanda Stephen for *The Spirit of the Wiyot People of Humboldt Bay* on why the Wiyot settled in the Humboldt area, a member of the Wiyot responded, “… We have always been here!’ She was not speaking of the [Table Bluff] reservation but of. . . Humboldt and [the] surrounding area.” Archaeologists date Wiyot presence on Indian Island back to at least the year 400.

For centuries the coast of California north of San Francisco Bay was practically unknown by the world outside the Wiyot. It is easy to see why the white settlers coveted the land previously inhabited by the Wiyot. According to Diesner and Bertsch, the area around Humboldt Bay was the “…most favorable coastal area for modern commerce in California north of San Francisco.”

The Russian-American Company’s success in North America was tied to the fur trading and trapping business. These furs brought a high price in China. For a while the Russians held a monopoly on the fur trade. However, once word got out from Captain Cook about the financial gains being made in the Pacific fur business, many others,

---

especially white Americans, came to the coast of California in search of fur bearing animals.\textsuperscript{68}

Even though the phrase “Manifest Destiny” was not coined until 1845, the concept was around long before journalist John L. O’Sullivan came up with it. In The American People: Creating a Nation and a Society, Gary Nash states that this idea that the United States’ “…superior institutions and culture constituted a God-given-right, even obligation to spread American civilization across the entire continent” was well established.\textsuperscript{69} In this vein, the colony of Virginia claimed land to the Pacific Ocean. Nash also describes that Manifest Destiny caused expansionist policies to flourish. White Americans were convinced that expansion into the western territories was exclusively for the “yearly multiplying millions” of white Americans.\textsuperscript{70} Even by 1816, textbooks for white American children contained maps that extended the country’s western boundary to the Pacific Ocean. Also fueling migration to the West was the fact that lands east of the Mississippi River were becoming overcrowded. Increasing population, and improvements in transportation and communication pushed the idea that the country must absorb all available territory. Three hundred fifty thousand white Americans journeyed by land to California or Oregon between 1841 and 1867. While some went in search of gold, others planned on profiting as merchants, land speculators, or even farmers. Between 1849 and

\textsuperscript{68} Heckrotte, Discovery, 28.
1850, the white population of California alone increased from fourteen thousand to nearly one hundred thousand. Two years later this figure had more than doubled. By 1860, California’s white population was three hundred eighty thousand, most of whom were from the Midwest and the Upper South.\(^7^1\)

When the United States and Great Britain signed a treaty in 1818, they agreed to both occupy the Oregon Territory for a period of ten years. This territory included land south to San Francisco. Because Jedediah Smith did not determine where or even if the Trinity River emptied into Trinidad Bay in 1828, the joint control was extended. Some Americans did not like this hold the British had on their country. In fact, in 1831, President Andrew Jackson tried to persuade the federal government to do something to acquire this land for the United States. The British wanted access to the lucrative animal fur business. To counter this economic dominance, the United States government encouraged emigration in this territory.\(^7^2\) Then on January 24, 1848, when Major Pierson Reading came upon the rich gold deposits around a river in Northern California while trapping beaver and otter, more white Americans became interested in this part of the state. The river was named Trinity because Reading assumed it emptied into Trinidad Bay.\(^7^3\) The resulting rush to get to the deposits of gold inspired explorations of the North Coast. These explorations directly led to white Americans finding Trinidad Bay,

\(^7^1\) Nash, *American People*, 379, 384-387, 393, 395.
\(^7^2\) Pearsall, *Quest*, 89.
\(^7^3\) Carranco, *Redwood Country*, 12.
Humboldt Bay, Klamath River, Salmon River, and Scott River. Wallace Elliot observes that these discoveries by whites brought:

…thousands into this region, and transform[ed] it in one year from a beautiful wilderness to the home of [white-style] civilization, and making its hills resound to the unaccustomed sound of the axe, the rattle of the rocker, the shout of the packer, and the merry laugh of the miner.\(^{74}\)

Fortune seekers relentlessly tried to find Trinidad and Humboldt Bays in order to get supplies to the Trinity mines. In the early nineteenth century, the best way to transport supplies was to take them by ship up the coast, then inland by river. Early on there was hope that the Trinity River emptied into either Trinidad or Humboldt Bay. Towns developed around Humboldt Bay because the area would provide a quicker route to the Trinity mines then going by land from Southern California.\(^{75}\)

What Was The Impact?

Wallace Elliot describes the Humboldt area before Europeans and white American arrived as a “…region…in a state of nature, abounding with deer, antelope, elk, and bear. The streams were alive with beaver, and other fur bearing animals.”\(^{76}\) Ray Raphael contends that with the superiority complex of Europeans and white Americans there was no one person or group that could have averted the fate of California’s

\(^{74}\) Elliot, *History of Humboldt*, 81-82.
\(^{75}\) Coy, *Humboldt Bay Region*, 74.
\(^{76}\) Elliot, *History of Humboldt*, 81.
Northwest Indians. Native Americans were forced to modify their traditional way of life as a direct result of the fur trade encroaching on their territory. As European and white American hunters were drastically reducing fur bearing animals, the native belief that the futures of humans and animals were closely connected began to erode. In addition to decreases in their food source says Nash, the American Indians were exposed to diseases as well as a European style market economy that often turned their European trading partners into trading masters. These diseases plus violence killed off ninety percent of the American Indians in the thirty years after the California gold rush.

On the other hand even by 1851 some North Coast Indians had never seen a white American. As Raphael points out, these American Indians were not aware that they had been conquered by a foreign nation, let alone included into the new nation of the United States. The impact of this is seen in the steady decrease of the Wiyot that began being recorded about 1852. Many of the Wiyot were shot in retaliation for killings of whites, and also for breaking the white settlers laws and cultural taboos. Clashes were bound to occur when white Americans began to claim land that the American Indians were already living on and not willing to give up. In The Bluffs Around Us, Evelyn McCormick says the Wiyot population in 1770 was about one thousand, and about one hundred by 1910.

77 Raphael, White Father, 197.
78 Nash, American People, 96, 506.
79 Ibid., 30, 197.
As reported by Gail Opsahl in *Lo, The Poor Indian*, when white Americans began to settle in the Humboldt Bay area in large numbers in 1850, they faced four choices concerning Humboldt’s established Indian population: “…peaceful co-existence, amalgamation, removal of the Indians to reservations, and extermination.”

L.K. Wood, during the Josiah Gregg expedition, recorded that the American Indians that they encountered around Humboldt Bay “…were friendly and helpful.” The Wiyot aided the Gregg party with transportation and provisions, such as clams and eels to eat. However, when white Americans began to settle in the area they felt they were not only entitled to, but because of Manifest Destiny, it was their duty to their country to expand the nation from coast to coast. Like anyone in their situation, Anthony Bledsoe states in *Indian Wars of the Northwest*, this caused the native inhabitants to become uneasy. By 1850, it was obvious that small expeditions like Josiah Gregg’s were turning into a flood of white settlers, who projected an attitude that they had more right than anyone to any land within the United States borders. The whites over-shadowed the Wiyot by at least eight to one in 1850.

Coy emphasizes that as the Wiyot were stripped of their land, especially sacred land, so also were their traditions and spiritual beliefs. The first effect of the white invasion was a dramatic decrease in the food supply of the Wiyot. The white hunters with

---

83 Bledsoe, *Indian Wars*, 127.
85 Coy, *Humboldt Bay Region*, 137.
their guns easily killed the number of elk and deer that the Wiyot did many times over. The game that was left not only stayed in isolated places that was difficult to find, but were extremely skittish as to not come into range for bow and arrow. A consequence of their game being depleted was that the Wiyot turned to the only other animal in the area that could be easily killed with an arrow: the white settlers’ cattle. This cattle rustling, as the whites saw it, was proof that the American Indians were scavengers and not able to live as civilized people. The Wiyot tradition of burning the prairie grass to yield seeds, a large part of their diet, was seen as wasteful to the whites. Also this burning was decreasing the grazing land for cattle. In turn, allowing the cattle to graze on the prairies eliminated a vital dietary source for the Wiyot. In Ethno-geography and Archaeology of the Wiyot Territory, Llewellyn Loud insists that the ordinary Humboldt Bay settler viewed the Wiyot as a hindrance that was standing in the way of civilized progress. Therefore, peaceful co-existence was not an effective option for either group. On the other hand, states Loud, amalgamation could not work because white men who married Indian women were resented by the native men and became outcasts in the white community. Furthermore, their children became outcasts of both societies.86

When deciding how to deal with the Humboldt natives, the Humboldt Times, on February 4, 1860, expressed the feelings of the white settlers in an article that stated the best plan was “…to send them [Indians] so far away that they will never find their way

86 Loud, Ethno, 318, 325-326.
back, or kill them." The majority of the settlers leaned toward removal, either to a reservation fairly close by or even to another state. However, the choice of a site led to much disagreement and a lengthy delay. Because a decision for the place of a reservation was not being settled, the white community felt they were only left with extermination. This option became more and more popular when natives were blamed for the murder of whites. Loud describes an incident in 1852:

…when two white men were found murdered near the mouth of the Van Duzen River,…it was concluded that the Indians had killed them, and the settlers living around Humboldt Bay began to organize volunteer companies to punish the Indians. These groups first attacked the Wiyot settlements on and around the Bay, then the rancheria at Elk River, and finally proceeded to the Eel River village, killing perhaps twenty or twenty-five Indians in all. 

Hoopes adds that reports of this slaughter alarmed the federal government and prompted it to appropriate two hundred fifty thousand dollars in April of 1853 to establish five reservations that would be protected by the United States military. However, when mismanagement of food distribution and kidnapping of children and women inspired the natives to escape from the reservations, and returned to their old homes, the white communities began promoting the policy of extermination. A newspaper published in Union, the Northern Californian, stated: “If the people who intend to live here, who have their interests here, will earnestly take hold of this matter, the last tawny rascal may be taken from the county before next spring. And if one dares

---

87 Gail Opsahl, Lo, 13.
88 Loud, Ethno, 324.
89 Ibid., 324.
90 Hoopes, Lure of Humboldt, 77.
to show his head here after being removed, send him speedily to the happy hunting
grounds of his race."91 Theodore Hittell, in *History of California*, declares that these
white volunteer exterminators that were encouraged by the news articles and their fellow
community members, would many times kill indiscriminately, regardless of age or
gender. By the end of the decade, the situation for both the Humboldt natives and the
settlers had become desperate. This desperation would eventually lead to the Wiyot being
all but wiped out in February of 1860 on their sacred land on Indian Island.92

Legislation passed by the state of California came down on the state’s Indians
even though they were not citizens and could not benefit from any of the white peoples’
California Indians*, describes how in 1850 and 1851, the California Legislature passed
laws that “…prohibited Indians,…from giving evidence in favor of, or against, any white
person. The 1850 statute defined an Indian as having one-half Indian blood. The 1851
statute defined an Indian as having one-fourth or more of Indian blood.”93 Dodds
continues with an outline of Section 20 of the 1850 Act that gives the definition of a
vagrant Indian and the punishment to be given to any such vagrant Indian as:

[a]ny Indian able to work and support himself in some honest calling, not
having wherewithal to maintain himself, who shall be found loitering and
strolling about, or frequenting public places where liquors are sold,
begging, or leading an immoral or profligate course of life, shall be liable
to be arrested on the complaint of any resident citizen of the county, and

---

(Sacramento: California Research Bureau, 2002), 6.
brought before any Justice of the Peace of the proper county,…and if said Justice…shall be satisfied that he is a vagrant…he shall make out a warrant…to hire out such vagrant within twenty-four hours to the best bidder, for the highest price that can be had, for any term not exceeding four months.94

The land and resources of the Humboldt Bay were not left untouched by the invasion of the white American settlers either. Besides the elk and the deer, the forests and sea life would feel the effects of these settlers.

Virginia Sparks points out that when the Morrill Land Act was passed in 1862, large areas of timber could be purchased for commercial use. This act helped make the timber companies of Humboldt County successful. In the 1850s, the Humboldt lumber business began when William Carson, John Dolbeer, Joseph Russ, John Vance, David Jones, and David Evans initiated the harvesting of the seemingly endless forests.95

Due to the fact that the fastest way out of and into Humboldt was by the sea, shipbuilding became another prosperous enterprise. Most of the ships used by the timber businesses were built in Humboldt. One of the first Humboldt shipbuilders was Euphronius Cousins from Maine. His shipyard was near the location of present day J Street in Eureka. The Ocean Express was his first ship.96

The white settlers also found seafood plentiful. The first fish companies were located on the mouths of the Eel and Mad rivers by 1854. In 1857 two thousand barrels of cured salmon, halibut, and flounder, and fifty thousand pounds of smoked salmon were

---

94 Dodds, Early California Laws, 8.
95 Sparks, Indian Island, 8.
96 Ibid., 8.
shipped to San Francisco, New York, Australia, China. Clams were found in the Bay’s mad flats near Union. Both whales and sharks were caught for their oil and used for lighting purposes. In fact, sharks were preferred because the Leopard, Cow, and Sand shark oil was considered to be better quality than whale. Also these sharks were easily located in the calm waters of the Bay. In the month of June, 1856, the Sam Slick caught enough sharks to yield three hundred gallons of oil. Other fisheries that popped up were Dungeness crab, oysters, shrimp, sole, rockfish, and tuna.\textsuperscript{97} Sparks states that “[a]ll the alphabet streets from A through U ended in a dock, a sawmill or a shipyard.”\textsuperscript{98}

\textsuperscript{97} Coy, Humboldt Bay Region, 135-136.
\textsuperscript{98} Sparks, Indian Island, 8.
CONCLUSION

Historians agree on the basic facts in evidence concerning the Humboldt Bay area as to who arrived, when they arrived and why. There can be no doubt as to who discovered and was living around the Bay first: the Wiyot. The Wiyot believed that they have always been here, and Bledsoe insists that archaeologists have determined the Wiyot have been here from at least 400 C.E. The Wiyot found almost of all their basic necessities around the Bay, from food and shelter, to clothing and cooking materials.

Next came the Europeans, and first among them were the British. However, there is no solid evidence that Sir Francis Drake or George Vancouver positively identified Humboldt Bay even though they definitely sailed by it. Coy, Hoopes, and Pearsall have established that the Spanish explorers, Don Bruno de Heceta and Don Francisco de la Bodega y Quadra were the first Europeans to locate and plot Humboldt Bay in 1775, at least one thousand, three hundred seventy-five years after the Wiyot.

The first American, on behalf of the Russian-American Company, to find and map the Bay from sea was Jonathan Winship and the O’Cain. Winship came to the area for the financial gain involved in the fur trade. There is little proof that the O’Cain sailed into it, but there is the possibility some of her crew launched a small boat into the southern end.

By land, there is no doubt that Josiah Gregg and his group camped around and sampled Humboldt Bay in 1849. The Gregg party was motivated to explore the
possibility of finding a water route from the Pacific Ocean to the Trinity mines. Wallace Elliot is one of the only authors who supports the idea that Jedediah Smith visited the Bay from a land route before the Gregg party. Some of the members of the Gregg party also were the pioneers of developing Union Town in 1850, now the town of Arcata, and Buck’s Port, now south Eureka.

Finally, after the Gregg party, there were those white Americans sailing up the coast of California from San Francisco who were also searching for a river that connected the Pacific to the mines on the Trinity. Among these were the ships the Cameo, Laura Virginia, and General Morgan. Of these, the Laura Virginia has the distinction of being the first ship to sail through the entrance and into Humboldt Bay. Her crew also gave the name to the Bay and one of its settlements, Humboldt City. While Coy, Hoopes, Pearsall, Genzoli, and Carranco all agree that the Cameo missed the Bay, Carranco and Genzol make a weak argument that the General Morgan located Humboldt Bay before the Laura Virginia. These expeditions did lead to the founding of Eureka. However, when it comes to the local history of Humboldt Bay, the Laura Virginia and her second mate, H.H. Buhne, will forever be remembered as the first Americans to successfully enter the Bay from the Pacific Ocean.
LESSON PLAN

Introduction

This project will provide an eighth grade lesson that will incorporate a description of the various groups and individuals that settled and explored Humboldt Bay between the fifteenth and mid-nineteenth centuries. The examination of primary documents, the geography of the physical environment, and the development of the economy will be the focus. Students will explore why Humboldt Bay was an important resource for those who settled here. They will also discover how the timber, shipbuilding, and fishing industries developed. All of these topics will reflect the main theme of the unit: explorers are motivated by three things: financial gain, religious conversion, and/or adventure.

Finally, students will understand how the local history of Humboldt Bay fits in with the following California History-Social Science Content Standards:

8.8.2

Describe the purpose, challenges, and economic incentives associated with westward expansion, including Manifest Destiny and the territorial acquisitions that spanned numerous decades.

8.12.1

Trace patterns of agricultural and industrial development as they relate to climate, use of natural resources, markets, and trade and locate such development on a map.
The following National Standards will also be emphasized:

NSS-USH.5-12.1 ERA 1: Three Worlds Meet (Beginnings to 1620)
Understands how early European exploration and colonization resulted in cultural and ecological interactions among previously unconnected peoples.

NSS-USH.5-12.2 ERA 2: Colonization and Settlement (1585-1763)
Understands why the Americans attracted Europeans, and how Europeans struggled for control of North America and the Caribbean. Understands how political, religious, and social institutions emerged in the English colonies. Understands how the values and institutions of European economic life took root in the colonies.

NSS-USH.5-12.4 ERA 4: Understands United States territorial expansion between 1801 and 1861, and how it affected relations with external powers and Native Americans. Understands how the industrial revolution, increasing immigration, the rapid expansion of slavery, and the westward movement changed the lives of Americans and led toward regional tensions. Understands the extension, restriction, and reorganization of political democracy after 1800. Understands the sources and character of cultural, religious, and social reform movements in the antebellum period.

The timeline for this lesson is nine fifty-minute class periods that will include mapping exercises, an examination of L.K. Wood’s journal, and discussions of local historical landmarks, local American Indian groups, the interactions between white settlers and the Wiyot, local places named for the original Humboldt explorers and settlers, and the natural resources of the Humboldt Bay area. The first three days will be devoted to Humboldt County’s physical geography and its American Indian groups, primarily the Wiyot. Days four and five will entail discussions about the European explores that arrived off the coast of Humboldt County, as well as many of the first white American Humboldt settlers. The sixth, eighth, and ninth days will involve the
culminating Humboldt memorial activity. The field trip to the Myrtle Grove Cemetery and the bay cruise on the Madakat will be on the seventh day.

Prior Content Knowledge and Skills

Students will have an understanding of the Age of Exploration from the fifteenth through the nineteenth centuries. Students will understand the events that led to the push for European exploration. Students will acknowledge that one or more of the following motivations influenced European exploration: financial gain, adventure, and/or religious conversion. Students will know that the products coming out of Asia such as silk, gems, spices, etc., stimulated exploration. Students will know that the European explorers that went by sea were searching for the fastest route to Asia, whether that was south sailing from Europe around Africa, or west across the Atlantic. Students will be able to identify the home countries and basic travel routes of European explorers such as Sir Francis Drake, Christopher Columbus, Bartolome Dias, Vasco da Gama, Ferdinand Magellan, Francisco Pizarro, Hernan Cortes. Students will be aware of the fact that once European explorers ran into North America, some sailed south around South America, while others searched for a water route across the North American continent. Students will know the impact these explorers had on the native populations of Africa, the Pacific islands, and North and South America. From earlier lessons, the students will know the physical landscape of the United States. They will be familiar with the territorial expansion and the major treaties with Indian nations during the terms of the first four presidents. They
will know the names of the various Humboldt County American Indian groups. The students will understand how industrialization and technological developments influenced the growth of cities, deforestation, farming, and mineral extraction. They will be familiar with the reasons why and the impact that immigrants from Northern Europe had on the United States. The students will also know that various American Indian nations, Spain, and finally the United States have claimed the current site of Humboldt County. Finally, students will understand the meaning of Manifest Destiny, and the purpose, challenges, territorial acquisitions, and economic incentives associated with westward expansion.

The skills students will use include reading and analyzing primary documents, reading and creating physical and political maps, and being able to duplicate Humboldt Indian basket designs using paint.

Discussion of Content Hook

Introductory Hook: The teacher pairs up students for a Think-Pair-Share activity. Teacher writes on the overhead or board a group of beings from some obscure planet in a distant galaxy far, far, away, lands their spaceship on the street in front of where you live. They move into your house, and tell you that you may choose one of the smallest rooms to live in. However, if you go into any other room, including the bathroom, or use the front door, or eat any of the food in the house they will either kick you out or vaporize you. So you have three choices: do exactly what they want, move somewhere else, or fight
and inevitably become exterminated. What will you do? On a piece of lined paper, students have five minutes to silently write a description of which option they chose, why the chose it, and what outcome they predict will happen. After the silent writing period, students have five minutes to share their choice and reasons with their partner. Next, teacher puts two pairs together and gives the groups five minutes to choose the best paragraph of the four to read to the class. Finally, each group selects a speaker that will read their choice aloud to the entire class.

This activity hooks the students by having them think about something directly happening to them and/or their family. Students are put in the place of the Wiyot Indians, and are required to analyze how they feel about a situation during which they have little control, and how they would react. Once students think about how an event could affect them, especially in a negative way, they have more buy in and sympathy in regard to a negative consequence that actually happened to someone else.

To transition from this hook directly into the lesson, the teacher puts on the overhead a transparency of a map of the original Wiyot territory from page 21 of Ann Elliott’s Exploring Our World: Humboldt County, and says, “This activity just simplified what happened to the Wiyot Indians. This is a map of the original Wiyot territory.” Then the teacher puts up a transparency of the current Wiyot territory that includes the non-Wiyot settlements within the Wiyot’s former territory, from page 6 of Ann Elliott’s Exploring Our World: Humboldt County. These settlements include places such as
Eureka and Arcata. Then the teacher says, “This is a present day map of the area once claimed by the Wiyot. How has it changed?” Comments will vary.

Lesson Content

Day One

(1) As students enter the classroom at the beginning of the period they write the answer in their school planner to the following statement on the overhead: *Name one of the American Indian nations that occupied territory in what is now Humboldt County.* After the tardy bell rings, students volunteer to answer the question. *Possible answers are Wiyot, Yurok, Karok, Mattole, Hupa, Chilula, Whilkut, Nongatl, Lassik, Sinkyone, Wailaki, Wintun, or Kuneste Group.* After receiving correct answers, the teacher shows all possible answers on the overhead.

(2) The teacher performs the Introductory Hook. (See description in Discussion of Content Hook)

(3) The teacher puts on the overhead a transparency of a map of the original Wiyot territory from page 20 of Ann Elliot’s *Exploring Our World: Humboldt County*, and says, “This activity just simplified what happened to the Wiyot Indians. This is a map of the original Wiyot territory.” Then the teacher puts up a transparency of the current Wiyot territory that includes the non-Wiyot settlements within the Wiyot’s
former territory from page 6 of Ann Elliot’s Exploring Our World: Humboldt County. These settlements include places such as Eureka and Arcata. Then the teacher says, “This is a present day map of the area once claimed by the Wiyot. How has it changed?” Comments will vary.

(4) After the hook and the discussion, the teacher hands out to each student the Wiyot stories called “Kutaw” and “How the Spider Got Its Web.”99 Students take turns reading aloud paragraphs from the stories. After finishing the stories, the teacher asks the students, “What is the purpose of these two stories?” Answer will be: to explain why things in nature are the way they are. Some people rely on science, some people rely on religion, and some people rely on legends.

(5) The teacher reminds students to bring colored pencils or markers for a mapping activity during the next class period.

Day Two

(1) As students enter the classroom at the beginning of the period they write the answer in their school planner to the following question on the overhead: What American Indian nation occupied the land around Humboldt Bay? After the tardy bell rings, students volunteer to answer the question. The answer is Wiyot.

99 Table Bluff Reservation Library.
The teacher hands out to each student a two-sided copy of an outline map of Humboldt County borders and rivers from page 12 of Ann Elliot’s *Exploring Our World: Humboldt County*. The teacher puts on the overhead a transparency of the same map. The teacher directs the students to label one side of the map as “Humboldt County American Indians”. The teacher models for the students how to outline the borderlines of the thirteen main American Indian nations of Humboldt County. First, the teacher tells the students, “We will color each of the main American Indian nation’s territory within Humboldt County a different color. You need to find the colors purple, green, red, blue, orange, black, yellow, pink, and brown. We will start with purple and outline the Yurok territory. Fill in the color key on your map with the correct color.” The teacher allows the students about a minute to accomplish this. “Find the green and outline the Kurok. Fill in the color key on your map with the correct color.” The teacher allows the students about a minute to accomplish this. “Find the red and outline the Chilula. Fill in the color key on your map with the correct color.” The teacher allows the students about a minute to accomplish this. “Find the blue and outline the Hupa. Fill in the color key on your map with the correct color.” The teacher allows the students about a minute to accomplish this. “Find the orange and outline the Chimariko. Fill in
the color key on your map with the correct color.” The teacher allows
the students about a minute to accomplish this. “Find the black and
outline the Whilkut. Fill in the color key on your map with the correct
color.” The teacher allows the students about a minute to accomplish
this. “Find the yellow and outline the Wiyot. Fill in the color key on
your map with the correct color.” The teacher allows the students about
a minute to accomplish this. “Find the pink and outline the Nongatl.
Fill in the color key on your map with the correct color.” The teacher
allows the students about a minute to accomplish this. “Find the brown
and outline the Mattole. Fill in the color key on your map with the
correct color.” The teacher allows the students about a minute to
accomplish this. “Find the green and outline the Wintun with green
stripes. Fill in the color key on your map with the correct color.” The
teacher allows the students about a minute to accomplish this. “Find
the red and outline the Lassik with red stripes. Fill in the color key on
your map with the correct color.” The teacher allows the students
about a minute to accomplish this. “Find the blue and outline the
Sinkyone with blue stripes. Fill in the color key on your map with the
correct color.” The teacher allows the students about a minute to
accomplish this. “Find the black and outline the Wailaki with black
stripes. Fill in the color key on your map with the correct color. In six
days we will have a map quiz on the location of these American Indian nations. You will fill the correct color on the map after we complete the labeling of rivers and settlements on the backside map.

Next, the teacher says, “Turn your paper over and find a regular pencil.” Teacher gives the students one minute to find a pencil. The teacher directs the students to label this side of the map as “Humboldt Bay area Rivers and Settlements”. The teacher models on the overhead how to label the map with the rivers and settlements of the Humboldt Bay Area using A.L. Kroeber’s *Handbook of the Indians of California*. The rivers include the Klamath, Trinity, Redwood Creek, Little River, Mad, Elk, Eel, Van Duzen, South Fork, Bear, Mattole, and Trinidad and Humboldt Bays. The white American settlements include Trinidad, Arcata, Blue Lake, Eureka, Buck’s Port, Humboldt City, Loleta, Fortuna, and Ferndale. Next the Hupa Reservation, the North Spit and South Spit are labeled. Next, the Wiyot settlements are labeled with the letters A through T. The teacher then says, “Now fill in the key for the Wiyot settlements (See Appendix B). Label A as Ma’awar. B is Tabagaukwa. C is We’tso. D is Kachewinach. E is Osok. F is Witki. G is Kotsir. H is Tokelomiguitl. I is Dulawat. J is Pletswak. K is Yachwanawach. L is Legetku. M is Bimire. N is

---

Hiluwitl. O is Ho’ket. P is Wuktlakw. Q is Dakuagerawakw. R is Watsayeriditl. S is Hakitege. T is Kumaidada.” Finally, the teacher explains, “You have the rest of the period to complete coloring side one of the Humboldt County American nations.”

Day Three

(1) As students enter the classroom at the beginning of the period they write the answer in their school planner to the following statement on the overhead: Name one of the rivers located in Humboldt County.

After the tardy bell rings, students volunteer to answer the question. The answer may be the Klamath, Trinity, Little River, Mad, Elk, Eel Van Duzen, South Fork, Salmon, Mattole, or Bear.

(2) The teacher hands out the field trip permission slips that are due no later than 3:30 on Day Six.

(3) The teacher explains that, “Today we will be duplicating Humboldt County Indian basket designs using paint.” The teacher hands out examples of Wiyot basket designs copied from pages 174 to 181 of the book Indian Baskets\textsuperscript{101} by Sarah Peabody Turnbaugh and William Turnbaugh. The teacher says, “You have five minutes to choose several designs and practice painting on the piece of scratch paper. When the five minutes is up you must choose one design for your

\footnotesize\textsuperscript{101}Turnbaugh, Sarah Peabody and William A. Turnbaugh, Indian Baskets, (West Chester, Pennsylvania: Schiffer Publishing Ltd., 2004), 174-181.
basket.” Students next receive a Dixie cup of black or brown paint and a piece of scratch paper. After the five minutes, students receive a basket. The baskets are straw sun hats with the brims cut off. The teacher lets the students have the rest of the period to paint their design. The teacher instructs the students that, “Anyone who finishes before the period is over is to study the locations of the thirteen American Indian nations on your map for the map quiz in five days.”

Day Four

(1) As students enter the classroom at the beginning of the period, they write the answer in their school planner to the following statement on the overhead: *Name one of the countries that explored the northwest coast of California?* After the tardy bell rings, students volunteer to answer the question. *The possible answers include Great Britain, Spain, or the United States.*

(2) The teacher performs the second hook. The teachers asks the class the following series of questions:

- Raise your hand if you know how to get to Humboldt Bay.
- Raise your hand if you have been to Humboldt Bay.
- Raise your hand if you have been on or in Humboldt Bay.
- Raise your hand if you know why the bay was named Humboldt.
The teacher displays a transparency on the overhead of a picture of Alexander von Humboldt from the website www.bbaw.de/forschung/avh/images/portrait and explains that “Alexander von Humboldt was a German scientist and explorer in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The crew members of the American ship the Laura Virginia sailed from San Francisco in 1850 in search of a bay they had heard described by other white American explorers.” The teachers puts a transparency on the overhead with a picture of the Laura Virginia from Volume 50, Number 3 of the Humboldt Historian. The teacher continues, “The ship anchored in Trinidad Bay and her commander sent some crewmembers by land from Trinidad Bay south to search for the large bay they had seen from the Pacific Ocean. They found the bay, and when they told the commander about the bay he sent a one of his men in a small boat through the entrance of the bay to see if it was deep enough for the ship to sail through. It was, and the Laura Virginia was the first ship to sail through the entrance and into the bay. They also decided to name the bay Humboldt Bay because they admired Alexander von Humboldt. Von Humboldt was as famous in Europe as a star athlete is today in the United States.” The teacher holds up a model of a three-mast schooner and explains, “This ship model is similar to the Laura
Virginia.” The teacher has the students hand the model around to each other. The teacher then asks, “Who can tell me where Buhne Street is?” Wait for answers. “Who can tell me who Buhne was?” The teacher puts up a transparency on the overhead of a picture of Hans Buhne from page 72 of Ann Elliot’s Exploring Our World: Humboldt County. The Teacher explains, “Buhne Street is named after Hans Buhne who was the man that brought the small boat through the entrance of Humboldt Bay before the Laura Virginia made her attempt.”

Next the teacher asks, “Who knows where Albee Stadium is?” Answer will be the Eureka High School Football stadium. “Who knows who Albee was?” The teacher puts up picture of Joseph Albee from Wallace Elliot’s History of Humboldt County, California with Illustrations on the page opposite page 104. “Joseph Albee was among the first group of white Americans to settle in Humboldt County. He had a hotel on Table Bluff and one on Redwood Creek. Who knows where Russ Street is?” Answer will be near Henderson Street. The teacher puts up a picture of Joseph Russ also from Wallace Elliot’s History of Humboldt County, California with Illustrations.102 “Joseph Russ had one of the first successful lumber mills in Humboldt County.

102 Elliot, History of Humboldt County, 44-45.
One of his sawmills was on Indian Island.” The teacher shows a transparency on the overhead of a picture of Russ’s Excelsior Mill on Indian Island from *History of Humboldt County, California with Illustrations*.

“Russ also owned the Russ Market which is now where Video Experience is located on Third Street. Raise your hand if you know where the Carson Mansion is. Raise your hand if you have been to the Carson Mansion. Raise your hand if you have been inside. Raise your hand if you know who William Carson is.” The teacher puts on the overhead a transparency of the Carson Mansion from the website [www.a-victorian-inn.com/images/carson-mansion.jpg](http://www.a-victorian-inn.com/images/carson-mansion.jpg).

“William Carson was another early Eureka resident who was involved in the lumber business. Who knows where the Vance Hotel is? Who knows who John Vance is?” The teacher puts on the overhead a transparency of the Vance Hotel from the website [www.humboldthouses.com/images%20and%20logos/Wvance-Hotel.jpg](http://www.humboldthouses.com/images%20and%20logos/Wvance-Hotel.jpg). The Vance Hotel is on Third Street, and John Vance was also successful in the lumber industry. Raise your hand if you have heard of Dolbeer Street. Who knows where Dolbeer Street is?” The answer is near where St. Joseph’s Hospital is located. “John Dolbeer invented the steam Donkey. The Steam Donkey used wires to move

---

logs faster out of the forest and on to railcars.” The teacher puts on the overhead a transparency with a picture of the Dolbeer and Carson Bay Mill from *History of Humboldt County, California with Illustrations.*

“Who knows where Winship Middle School is? Who knows whom Jonathan Winship is?” Answers may vary. “In 1806, Jonathan Winship was commander of the ship the *O’Cain.* He sailed down from Alaska searching for sea otter. The Russian-American Fur Trading Company employed Winship. Some of his crewmembers took a small boat into Humboldt Bay. This was the first time any Europeans or Euro-Americans had entered Humboldt Bay. In 1775, the Spanish explorers Heceta and Bodega anchored in Trinidad Bay, but historians believe they probably thought Humboldt Bay was a lake or lagoon because the entrance to the Bay was very difficult to see before the jetties were built. Heceta and Bodega did have the honor of naming Trinidad Bay. They called it Trinidad because they found it on what the Catholic call Trinity Sunday. They also put a large wooden cross on Trinidad Head. In 1913, some women from Trinidad noticed that the wooden cross was damaged from wind and rain, and replaced it with a large cross that is made of granite. This cross is still there.” The teacher puts on the overhead a transparency of a picture of the granite

---

cross on Trinidad Head from the website www.sandspitbooks.com/history.html. The teacher adds that, “We will be seeing some of these places and talking more about these people when we take our field trip through the Myrtle Grove Cemetery and around Humboldt Bay on the Madakat. The Madakat is a boat that will take us on a tour of Humboldt Bay.” This activity hooks students by involving them in a discussion of their area. The topics are places they move than likely have been to, or at least heard of, or both. This makes history real to them because it is something that directly involves their life and their environment. They are also always pulled in by the mention of a field trip, especially one that takes place on a boat.

Teacher writes on the board the phrase *Explorers tend to be motivated by three things: financial gain, religious conversion, and/or adventure.* Then, the teacher asks the class, “Who are some well-known European explorers. *Answers will vary from Columbus to Magellan.* The teacher asks, “Who explored the Humboldt Bay area?” *Some may answer Winship, or Josiah Greg.* Next, the teacher asks, “Who lived in Eureka first?” *Answers will vary, some may say the American Indians or Yurok or Wiyot.* The teacher hands out to each student a copy of a chart listing the various groups that settled in Humboldt County and/or explored the Humboldt Bay area, and the theme of *Explorers tend to*
be motivated by three things: financial gain, for adventure, and/or religious conversion (See Appendix C and D). The teacher says, “I will walk you through the first row so you understand what I am looking for. For the first row that says Wiyot, draw an X in the box because the Wiyot believe they have always been here since the creation of the world. For the ‘when’ box write in the for the year ‘Beginning of time – 400 C.E.’ In the ‘why’ box write in ‘All their basic necessities of life were found in this area’. In the ‘outcome’ box, write ‘Used elk, deer, lion, salmon, seeds, eel, clams for food, and deer and grasses for clothing and cooking material’. Now I will give you the rest of the information for the remaining rows in story form, and you will need to pull out the appropriate information. Sir Francis Drake from Great Britain sailed his ship the Golden Hind along the northwest coast of California in 1579. He was searching for a route back to Europe that would avoid the Spanish settlements and ships along the Pacific coast of South America because he had stolen their treasures. Most historians believe Drake did not notice Humboldt Bay so he had no effect on the area. The Spanish explorers Heceta and Bodega, who I have already talked about anchoring in Trinidad Bay in 1775, were looking for a possible harbor that would help continue their hold on Spanish California. Seventy-five years later, when miners
searched for gold on the Trinity River, others searched for away to get to the Trinity River from the Spanish Trinidad Bay. Jonathan Winship was an American citizen when his crew came upon Humboldt Bay in 1806 while hunting sea otters. Winship mapped Humboldt Bay. This map motivated more white Americans to be interested in exploring and settling the area around the Bay. Josiah Gregg was also an American citizen who came to Humboldt by land in 1849. Gregg and his group of eight men wanted to see if the Trinity River or any other river emptied into Trinidad Bay or the Bay of Indians that Winship mapped. Their exploration led to the naming of the Mad and Van Duzen rivers, and the settlement of the towns of Arcata and Buck’s Port. Tomorrow we will read more about these places in L.K. Wood’s journal. These settlements led directly to the decrease in the Wiyot population. I have already discussed the 1850 journey of Commander Ottinger and the *Laura Virginia*, who came in search of the Bay. This expedition led to the naming of the Bay and the settlement of Humboldt City that brought more white European-Americans to invade the lands claimed by the Humboldt Indian Nations. Now turn your paper over so we can fill in the back. Some of the white Americans who were involved in the early stages of the lumber industry were Joseph Russ, William Carson, John Vance, Isaac Minor, and John Dolbeer. It became a very
successful business, shipping timber products to San Francisco, New York, Australia and China. It still employs many people in the county today. Some pioneers in Humboldt’s shipbuilding industry were Euphreronius Cousins, Hans Bendixsen, and Joseph Russ. Indian Island, known then as Gunther Island, had a very successful shipbuilding business, and many of the local fishing and shipping boats at the time were made locally. The fishing boats Mary Ann and Sam Slick were successful in the 1850s. Some of the fisheries caught and marketed crab, salmon, clams, oysters, sole, rockfish, shrimp, tuna, and halibut. Whales from the Pacific Ocean, and sharks and seals in the Bay were hunted for their oil. Fishing is still a big business today. Anyone who has not finished filling in the chart must finish it for homework.”

Day Five

(1) As students enter the classroom at the beginning of the period they write the answer in their school planner to the following statement on the overhead: Name one of the American citizens that explored the northwest coast of California? After the tardy bell rings, students volunteer to answer the question. The possible answers include Jonathan Winship, Josiah Gregg, L.K. Wood, Douglas Ottinger, or Hans Buhne.

(2) The teacher collects the chart from the previous day.
The teacher gives each student a copy of pages 83 to 84, and 88 to 92, as well as 95 from *History of Humboldt County, California with Illustrations* relating a section of L.K. Wood’s journal that describes the Gregg party’s exploration of the Humboldt area from. Students will take turns reading paragraphs from the narrative.

For homework, students complete the “L.K. Wood Journal” question sheet (See Appendix E).

Day Six

As students enter the classroom at the beginning of the period they write the answer in their school planner to the following statement on the overhead: *Name the three things that tend to motivate explorers.*

After the tardy bell rings, students volunteer to answer the question. *Answers is the opportunity for financial gain, adventure, and/or to convert others to their religion.*

The teacher collects field trip permission slips.

The teacher explains to the students, “Each of you will be designing an outdoor display in the form of a marker or memorial or statue for the Eureka Boardwalk. You may choose from the Wiyot, the European explorers of the Humboldt coast, or the white European-American Humboldt explorers or settlers.” The teacher hands around pictures of

---

examples of displays taken at Gettysburg, Independence Hall, West
Point, the Baseball Hall of Fame, and the FDR Estate. The teacher
says, “You are required to have a visual as well as written description
of your display. You must also describe if and how the group you
chose fits into the explorer theme, why you chose the group/person you
did, and why they deserve to be remembered. This is due the day after
the Humboldt Indian map test. You have the rest of the period to begin
your design.”

Day Seven

(1) The students go to the Myrtle Grove Cemetery and on the Madakat
Bay tour. At the cemetery the students will choose one of the early
settler’s tombstone and make a crayon rubbing of it to display in the
classroom.

Day Eight

(1) As students enter the classroom at the beginning of the period they
write the answer in their school planner to the following statement on
the overhead: Name one of the things you learned on the bay tour.
After the tardy bell rings, students volunteer to answer the question.
Answers will vary.

(2) The teacher gives the students five minutes to study for the map quiz.
(3) Students take the map quiz (See Appendix F). When students finish the map quiz, they are to work on their boardwalk display designs for the rest of the period.

Day Nine

(1) As students enter the classroom at the beginning of the period they write the answer in their school planner to the following statement on the overhead: *What person or group does your memorial design commemorate?* After the tardy bell rings, students volunteer to answer the question. *Answers will vary.*

(2) Students present their memorial designs to the class. Students explain why they believe the person/group is worthy of being commemorated. The students also describe if and how the group each student chose fits into the explorer theme.

Evaluation

The evaluation instruments used to understand how well the students understood the content and theme are in the form of a map quiz (See Appendix G), and a design for a display on the Eureka Boardwalk. Each student designs an outdoor display in the form of a marker or memorial or statue for the Eureka Boardwalk. The students may choose from the Wiyot, the European explorers of the Humboldt coast, or the white European-
American Humboldt explorers or settlers. The teacher hands around pictures of examples of displays taken at Gettysburg, Independence Hall, West Point, the Baseball Hall of Fame, and the FDR Estate. The students are required to have a visual as well as written description of their display. The students must also describe if and how the group each student’s display depicts fits into the explorer theme, why they chose the group/person you did, and why they deserve to be remembered. This is due on the ninth day.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

BOOKS


**NEWSPAPER ARTICLES**


**NON-PERIODICAL INTERNET DOCUMENTS**


**THESES AND DISSERTATIONS**


Heckrotte, Warren A. “The Discovery of Humboldt Bay: A New Look at an Old Story.” Berkley, California, no date given.

Opsahl, Gail. “Lo, The Poor Indian.” Humboldt State University, 1976; Arcata, California.

GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS


VIDEO CASSETTE

APPENDIX A: Winship Chart of Humboldt Bay\textsuperscript{106}

\textsuperscript{106} Coy, \textit{Humboldt Bay Region}, 28.
## Wiyot Settlements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## APPENDIX C: Humboldt Bay Explorers and Settlers

### HUMBOLDT BAY EXPLORERS AND SETTLERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who</th>
<th>From</th>
<th>When</th>
<th>Why</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wiyot</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sir Francis Drake</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heceta and Bodega</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jonathan Winship and the “O’Cain”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Josiah Gregg</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Douglass Ottinger and the “Laura Virginia”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Theme** – Explorers tend to be motivated by three things:
## INDUSTRIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Who</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lumber</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shipbuilding</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX E: L. K. Wood Journal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name _____________________________</th>
<th>Number ____</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Who led L.K. Wood and the others to the Humboldt area?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Name the other six men in the group.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Why did L.K. Wood describe the redwood trees as a “forest prison”?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Why did the group not want to wait for Gregg to take his measurements at Mad River?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Why did Wood consider the Humboldt Indians “friendly”?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Speculate why the Van Duzen river was named after Van Duzen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Some have claimed that Josiah Gregg’s death was not caused by starvation. Why might this be?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX F: Humboldt Indian Map Quiz