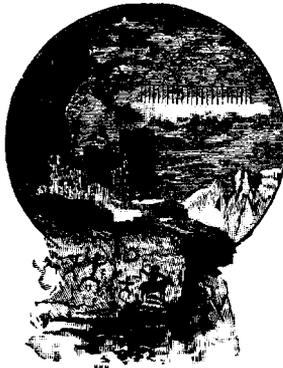


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HANDBOOK  
OF THE  
INDIANS OF CALIFORNIA

BY  
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## CHAPTER 21.

### THE ACHOMAWI AND ATSUGEWI.

**THE ACHOMAWI:** Habitat, 305; divisions, names, and population, 306; war and trade, 308; food, 309; industries, 310; dress, 310; money, 311; dwellings, 311; social institutions, 313; ritual, 313; shamanism, 314; mythology, 315; place of culture, 315. **THE ATSUGEWI,** 315.

#### THE ACHOMAWI.

##### HABITAT.

The territory of the Achomawi comprised the drainage of Pit River—an eastern affluent of the Sacramento much larger than the so-called main river—from near Montgomery Creek in Shasta County up to Goose Lake on the Oregon line; with the exception of the territory watered by three southern tributaries, Burney, Hat, and Horse or Dixie Valley Creeks, along which the Atsugewi were lodged.

Like the northwestern Californians and the Shasta, the Achomawi were a stream people. Their villages were all on Pit River itself or on the lower courses of its affluents. The back country was visited and owned, but not settled. A solid color on the map accordingly gives a one-sided impression of the relation of many Californian tribes to their habitat.

This is particularly true of the Achomawi, all of whose territory is high and comparatively barren as soon as the streams are left behind, while a large part of it, particularly to the north of Pit River, is pure waste lava.

For this reason the boundaries of Achomawi land are of little significance compared with an understanding of the narrow tracts actually dwelt in.

On the north, toward the Modoc, the Achomawi territorial limits are particularly vague and immaterial. We know merely that they hunted to Mount Shasta and Medicine Lake; but the Modoc may have gone as far or farther south in legitimate pursuits. The essential relation was that the settlements of the one people were on Lower Klamath and Rhett Lakes and Lost River, of the other on Pit River, with a great emptiness between.

The shores of Goose Lake, out of which Pit River flows, have been claimed in their entirety for the Achomawi, the Modoc, and the Northern Paiute. As there appears to be no specific mention of villages of any of the three groups as actually on the shores of the lake, the uncertainty has been compromised on

the map by extending the Achomawi to it and giving the bulk of its shores to the Paiute. The mountains west of Goose Lake would seem to have formed the western boundary of the Paiute; but we do not know.

The range between the Achomawi South Fork of Pit River and the Paiute Middle and Lower Lakes can hardly have been other than a recognized limit. Still farther south and west the undrained Madeline plains and Eagle Lake Basin offer difficulty to the cartographer. The latter has been variously assigned to Achomawi, Atsugewi, Maidu, and perhaps Paiute, though no authority appears to have asserted that any of them lived on the lake drainage. The region is more similar in its character to the territory of the two northern groups than to the Maidu range; and of the two northern and allied peoples, the Atsugewi had the nearer habitations in Dixie Valley.

Our knowledge also fails to suffice for the drawing of a real line between the Achomawi and the Atsugewi, except that the former, on Pit River, held the mouths of the three streams along which, farther up, the latter lived. Beaver Creek is between Dixie Valley Creek and Hat Creek, but is specifically assigned to the Achomawi. The reason for this distribution is evidently the fact that Beaver Creek flows parallel and close to Pit River, while the other streams come in from a distance and at right angles.

On their lower Pit River range the Achomawi border on Yana, Wintun, and Okwanuchu. The stated boundary between Achomawi and Okwanuchu cuts across the headwaters of the McCloud, which may be true, but would be bad Indian custom unless the Achomawi had villages on these headwaters. The recorded line perhaps signifies nothing more than that the Okwanuchu had no villages there. At that, it is hardly conceivable that they should not have hunted on these upper courses, and the real question would seem to be whether the Okwanuchu and Achomawi avowedly shared the right of visit to the district, or whether the former owned the tract and the latter poached on it when they felt themselves strong enough.

As to Mount Shasta, there were no Achomawi near it. That they hunted to it, and did so within their rights, is likely. It was customary for great peaks to be regarded by Californian peoples as the starting points of their several boundaries.

#### DIVISIONS, NAMES, AND POPULATION.

We know no Pit River villages. Some 8 or 10 group names on record are given below. They refer collectively to the people of natural areas, such as valleys or drainage basins. It is needful not to apply habits of interpretation formed from acquaintance with eastern tribes to these names. There is little to show whether or not the villages in any such area felt themselves united politically; in other words, whether it would be justifiable to reckon them as tribes. Even the names appear to be geographic and not national, much as in a larger view we speak of Sudan or South American peoples. It is even doubtful whether the inhabitants of each valley used their name, except as now and then they might on occasion copy the practice of outsiders. To themselves they may have been only the people of this and that particular village. But when they thought of the inhabitants of the next basin, and particularly of those still

farther away, they no doubt generally spoke of them under their generic designations.

A similar situation has been described among the Yuki. The apparent difference between these people and the Achomawi, on the one hand, and, say, the Miwok on the other, may be a reflection of a different topography, rather than of another type of political organization. Where the country falls into naturally habitable basins separated by unsettled tracts, group names spring up. Where, as among the Yurok, villages are threaded along a single stretch of river or, as with the Miwok, scattered indiscriminately over a broken but generally uniform country, all parts of which are about equally favorable to permanent location, the larger group names have less occasion to arise. It is only where we encounter definite group consciousness not based on topography but frequently transcending it, and expressed in an individual dialect and a group name, as among the shifting but solidary Yokuts divisions, that we can begin justly to speak of tribes. Everywhere else the only recognizable political unit remains the small cluster of adjacent villages recognizing the authority of the same head man. Whether the Achomawi divisions, such as the Ilmawi and Hantiwi, were such unit communities, corresponding to the Pomo political groups that have been enumerated, or comprised each several communities, there is little present means of deciding.

These are the divisions: Madehsi, lowest on Pit River, along the big bend; Achomawi, on Fall River; Ilmawi, on the south side of the Pit, opposite Fort Crook; Chumawi, in Round Valley; Atuami, in Big Valley; Hantiwi, in lower Hot Springs Valley; Astakiwi, in upper Hot Springs Valley; Hamawi, on the South Fork of Pit River.

Of the several subdivisions, the Astakiwi or Astahkewa are said to have been named after a principal village near Canby, Astake, "hot spring." The Atuami have also been recorded as the Tuhteumi and Hamefketeli, though there is no *f* in Achomawi or any adjacent language. All three of the supposed synonyms may in reality refer to the people of three villages rather than to the Big Valley people as a whole. The Madehsi are called Puisu or Pushush, "easterners," by the Wintun whom they adjoin; and the name Yucas or Yuki has also been recorded for them from the same source, though without specific force, since Yuki means merely "foreign" or "foe" in Wintun, and in ethnological usage has come to be restricted to the entirely distinct people in the Coast Range on the other side of the Wintun. A group known as Idjuigilumidji were called Akowigi by the Atsugewi. Itami seems to be a synonym for the Achomawi division.

On the basis of speech conditions elsewhere in California, it may be suspected that the Achomawi language was not identical from lower Pit River to Goose Lake; but nothing is on record concerning dialectic variations.

In native parlance, Achomawi is the name only of that part of the group living in the basin of Fall River. For what ethnologists call the Achomawi, the Atsugewi generic term Pomarii, which denotes all the people speaking the same language—the Hamawi, Atuami, Ilmawi, and others, as well as the Achomawi

proper—would therefore have been a more appropriate designation. But Achomawi is so well rooted that a new term would cause confusion. The universal local denomination "Pit Rivers" is appropriate even if it is inelegant and without native flavor.

The Maidu call the Achomawi Kom-maidüm—that is, "snow Maidu," more literally, "snow people." The old book name Palaihnihan is said to be based on Klamath-Modoc Palaikni or P'laikni, "mountaineers," which may perhaps be taken as the specific name of the group in that Oregonian tongue. The Yuki know a few Achomawi transplanted to Round Valley reservation as Shawash, a name that is of interest only in that it evidences the southward extension of the Chinook jargon, or fragments of it, as far as northernmost California. Siwash ("sauvage") is jargon for Indian and not a Yuki or Achomawi word. The two peoples did not know of each other's existence until the Americans threw them together.

The Achomawi population in 1910 was almost 1,000, three-fourths still full blood, according to the Government's reckoning. About a tenth had drifted out of the Pit River Valley into Oregon or remained at Round Valley Reservation. The thinness of the American population over their habitat has unquestionably preserved the Achomawi in a more favorable proportion than tribes in densely settled districts; so that, instead of a tenth or a fiftieth, we may reckon their present numbers as constituting perhaps a third or more of the original population. This may be set roughly at 3,000 for the Achomawi and Atsugewi combined.

#### WAR AND TRADE.

The Modoc, and with them their close kinsmen the Klamath, fought the Achomawi. Their proximity to northern tribes who formerly kept slaves, and to the great intertribal market at The Dalles, made the taking of slaves from the Achomawi profitable to these Oregonians, and stimulated them, at times, to raid for booty. The Achomawi had the usual Californian point of view: a stranger would usually be killed on principle because he was a stranger, and a neighbor would be attacked when he had given grievance. But war for the fun of the game, or for gain, was foreign to their ideas, so that they would be actuated to retaliate against the Modoc only by revenge; and as they scarcely even made the attempt, it is likely that fear tempered their desire for vengeance. Specific evidence as to Achomawi relations with the Klamath-Modoc is, however, conflicting. An American writer speaks of the Astakiwi and Hantiwi as much harried by the northerners, while the near-by Atuami were nearly exempt. Yet the Atsugewi of Hat Creek remember Modoc or Klamath attacks in which women were carried off. It is not unlikely that local feuds underlay the warfare here as elsewhere in California, and that slave raiding was a superadded and later feature, encouraged by the introduction of the horse. We do not really know.

With the Atsugewi and Wintun to the southwest the Achomawi were friendly. How they stood with the Okwanuchu and Yana on the west and the northern Paiute on the east seems not to have been recorded. In some measure the Achomawi served as transmitters in trade between the Sacramento Valley Wintun and the Modoc and perhaps Paiute farther inland. Shell beads traveled up Pit River, furs down the stream. As in the civilized world, the lowlanders received raw materials and gave manufactures to the back peoples.

#### FOOD.

Oaks become scarce in Achomawi territory in proportion to the distance from the Sacramento Valley, and the eastern divisions of the nation, while they might now and then secure a temporary supply of acorns by trade, subsisted rather on the plant food used in the Nevada and Oregon portions of the Great Basin than on those characteristic of most of California. Salmon hardly ascended beyond Fall River, so the easterly groups had to go without a regular supply of this food also. The lower Pit River tribes got the fish in abundance, however. It was sun dried, slightly roasted or smoked, and then put away in large bark-covered baskets, either in slabs or as a crumbled powder.

Deer can not have been especially abundant in the dry habitat of the Achomawi, so that their development of a particular method of taking the animal, in addition to those common to all the Californian tribes, is interesting. This device, as simple in plan as it must have been laborious in execution to a people operating only with sticks and baskets, was to dig concealed pits, 2 or 3 yards deep, in the runways. These holes, which were a great nuisance to the settlers until abolished by their edict, were numerous enough to give its name to Pit River; of which "Pitt" is a misspelling. Deer hunting was preceded by rituals; and while the specific taboos prevalent in other parts of northern California and designed to prevent any association of the hunt, the animal, or its flesh with sexual intercourse or menstruation, have not been mentioned for the Achomawi, it is not unlikely that they were also observed. Adolescent girls during their maturity ceremony stuffed their nostrils with fragrant herbs to avoid smelling cooking meat. This precaution may have been intended chiefly as regards venison.

Ducks were snared in nooses stretched across streams. Rabbits were often driven into nets. The large lifting net of the northwest is not referred to by any writer among the Achomawi. The dip net was reserved for trout and suckers in the small streams. Salmon were taken with the harpoon, by seines, or in nets and cratings hung above the water at falls and dams. There may have been some ani-

mals whose meat was not eaten, but none have been mentioned except the domestic dog—the most powerful poison known to all the Indians of northern California. Salt was avoided as causing sore eyes, a statement scarcely to be credited except on the assumption that, the supply being scant, over-indulgence was viewed with disfavor.

#### INDUSTRIES.

Achomawi basketry is of the twined type common to all northernmost California and southern Oregon. At its best it is not quite so well made as the finest Hupa and Yurok ware. The technique is identical and the materials appear to be so. Achomawi baskets are softer and average somewhat higher in proportion to diameter, and their pattern in consequence is less frequently disposed in a single horizontal band. The shapes rather approximate those of Modoc baskets, but the Modoc reliance on tule as a material is not an Achomawi trait. Nearly all baskets in collections are solidly covered with the white overlay of *Xerophyllum*. This may, however, mean that they are trade articles and that the Achomawi of to-day no longer cook in baskets, since the overlay stains when wet for a time, and is used only as a sparing pattern by the Yurok on baskets meant to hold water or to boil in. Or it may be that the difference is old and connected with the scarcity of acorns and comparative nonuse of gruel among the Achomawi.

Other affiliations in material arts to the focus of the northwestern civilization are seen in the sinew-backed bow, only slightly less flat than among the Yurok; in the long body armor of hard elk or bear hide; the waistcoat armor of slender sticks wrapped together; and in the occurrence of the Yurok and Shasta type of guessing-game implement by the side of the Maidu form. Dugout canoes of pine or cedar were made, but lacked the characteristic details as well as the finish of the Yurok redwood boats. They were longer, narrower, scarcely modeled, and little more than punts for poling. They approximated the Modoc canoe, but without the thinness of wall that made the latter a notable achievement in spite of its lack of shape. Sacramento Valley influences showed themselves in the occasional use of the rush raft.

Maidu and other central Californian resemblances are manifest in the undecorated mush paddle, the crude bone spoon, the yellow-hammer forehead bands for dancing and shaman's operations, and in the fact of the double ball game being a woman's activity.

#### DRESS.

Achomawi dress was not only of buckskin but included a sort of coat or shirt, which, however rude, is a quite un-Californian idea.

A deerskin with a hole cut in the middle was slipped over the head after the sides had been sewn together below the armholes, and then belted. Buckskin leggings, with fringes, were not common, but were known. The commonest moccasin was of openwork twined tule stuffed with grass, but in dry weather deerskin moccasins were also favored. We have here the essential articles of the dress fashionable east of the Rocky Mountains. The only Pacific coast resemblance is an apron-like kilt, which substituted for the eastern breech-clout. California scarcely knows the latter.

Women's dress was more of a compromise. They wore a short gown or bodice, it is reported, much like that of the men. This would seem to be an abbreviation of the usual woman's dress of the Plains. From the hips down, a wrapping of deerskin formed a sort of separate skirt. Or this might be replaced by a fringed apron of northern Californian type. Leggingless buckskin moccasins and a basketry cap added further Pacific coast features to this hybrid attire.

Both men's and women's garments are spoken of as having been sometimes decorated with porcupine-quill embroidery. It is necessary to understand by this something simpler than the tasteful and showy ornamentation which the Plains women lavished upon nearly all their skin articles; but a specific eastern influence must be admitted nevertheless. The Achomawi received this influence, probably, from the Klamath and Modoc, who in turn were in more or less contact, at least after horses were introduced into the Columbia Valley, with the Sahaptin tribes, whose culture was superficially encrusted with elements from the Plains. The Modoc seem to have used some porcupine embroidery, and not infrequently introduced quills into their basket caps. It is interesting, however, that though this eastern influence penetrated into the north-eastern gateway to California which the Achomawi occupied, it did not travel farther, even in fragments.

Tattooing was slight. The women had three lines under the mouth, which are but a slender remnant of the almost solidly blue chin of the northwestern women; and added a few lines on the cheek in Yuki and Wailaki style. Men had the septum of the nose pierced for insertion of a dentalium shell or other ornament. This is also a Yana, Karok, and Tolowa practice.

#### MONEY.

In trading, the Achomawi are said to have used beads, from which it may be inferred that while they had dentalia as well as the central Californian shell disks, the latter were their principal currency.

#### DWELLINGS.

The summers were spent in the open, under a shade or behind a windbreak of brush or mats. The ordinary permanent or winter house was of bark, without earth covering, and little else than a slop-

ing roof over a shallow excavation. It has no northwestern affinities except the quadrilateral shape: the bark house of the central tribes was conical. The size, too, was not northwestern: only 8 by 12 feet or less. The most distinctive feature was a deliberate departure from rectangular form, the southern end being wider than the northern by the breadth of the included door. The two door posts matched a single post in the middle of the opposite end. The ridge pole consequently was double also. The narrow triangular space between the ridge poles, or part of it, was left open for a smoke hole.

The so-called "sweat house," which was primarily a dance house, chief's home, or dwelling for several families, was like the ordinary house except so far as its greater size, up to 20 by 30 feet or so, enforced modifications. The most important of these was a center

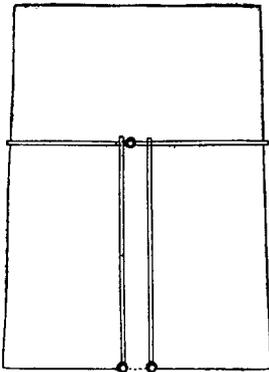


FIG. 25. — Achomawi large house, skeleton plan.

post, without which no Indian of the northern half of California would have thought a ceremonially used house complete. This was set not in the exact middle, but about two-thirds of the way from the broader front end. The roof was supported by two rafters laid transversely from the center post to the sides, and by two others reaching from these two to the door posts (Fig. 25). A second feature which proves this structure to have been essentially a form of the central Californian ceremonial chamber, was the earth roof; the bark of the living house was replaced by a layer of poles and brush. Finally, the smoke hole

probably replaced the door as the normal entrance, the door being kept as a draft hole. There is some doubt on this point, but as the closely allied Atsugewi favored the entrance and exit by the roof, and since this is a frequent north central Californian practice, it is hardly likely that the Achomawi diverged materially on a point to which so much significance was attached in custom. The ladder is stated to have been made of two poles with crossbars tied on by withes, a surprising fact—although mentioned also for the Maidu—since the ladder of both northwestern and central California is a notched log. The "sweat house" was dug out about a yard. Some villages contained more than one of these large structures.

In the recent period the Achomawi used the small steam-heated sweat house of the Plains. It came to them from the Klamath and Modoc, who in turn perhaps derived it from the Warm Springs and Umatilla groups farther north.

## SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS.

Little is known of the formalities of marriage or the rigidity of the purchase side of the arrangements. The bridegroom lived in the bride's home for a short time, hunting and otherwise working for her relatives, then usually took her to his people. This is perhaps the reality of what has been described as a sort of customary honeymoon. The custom indicates that so far as priority of descent was distinguished at all, it was reckoned in the male line. A statement that a chief was usually succeeded by his own eldest son points in the same direction. Betrothal of children was frequent. Food restrictions and seclusion were prescribed for both husband and wife until the end of their babe's umbilical cord fell off. One of each pair of twins was destroyed at birth.

The widow, as all through northernmost California, cropped her hair. She smeared the stubble with pitch, and added more on her face. She also wore a thong with lumps of pitch around her neck, and a carefully made belt of the hair she had cut. All this disfigurement might be left on for two or three years. After her hair had regrown to the upper arm, the widow married her dead husband's brother.

There is some conflict of information as to disposal of the dead, but it seems that they were normally buried, in flexed position, on the side, facing east, and if possible in a large basket. Cremation was used for those who died at a distance, and the ashes buried at home. In either event, the dead person's belongings, increased by offerings of his relatives, went with him, and his house was burned. There was no funeral dance or anniversary mourning ceremony.

## RITUAL.

Ceremonies were slight and few: the girl's adolescence ritual that prevails over most of California; a puberty rite for boys connected with the seeking of shamanistic power; and the victory dance, made around the head of a foe with women participating. Even the doctors' initiation dance, so prevalent in northern California, was lacking; and of anything like an esoteric society or impersonations of the gods, there was not a trace. There is mention of a first salmon ceremony, suggestive of the northwestern new year's rituals. Old men fasted in order to increase the run of the fish, while women and children ate out of sight of the river. But no further details are known.

The ceremonial number appears to be five, but the tendency to its use was not strong.

A girl in the physical condition that marks the threshold to womanhood had her ears pierced by her father or other relative. She was then lifted, dropped, and struck with an old basket and ran off, her father praying to the mountains in her behalf. In the evening she returned with a load of wood—symbolic, like the basket, of her career—built a fire before the house, and danced back and forth by it all night, accompanied by some of her relatives. Others might be dancing in the house. The singing was to a rattle of deer hoofs. Deer meat, in fact all meat and fish, were, however, strictly taboo to her, and to prevent herself even from smelling them cooking she stuffed scented herbs into her nostrils. In the morning, having been lifted up and dropped again, she ran off as before, but with the deer-hoof rattle. This was done for five days and nights. After the last night she returned quickly from her run, was sprinkled with fir leaves, and bathed. This ended the ceremony for the time, though it was repeated on the two following occasions.

The boy's puberty rite runs along parallel lines, but adds an element that is akin to the seeking of shamanistic power by eastern tribes. As soon as the ears are pierced, the boy is struck with a bowstring and runs off, to fast and bathe all night in a lake or spring while his father calls to the mountains and to the Deer Woman to watch him. In the morning he returns, lighting fires on the way, eats a little without entering the house, and goes off again. In this way several nights are spent in the solitude of the hills. Besides making fires, he piles up stones and drinks through a reed to keep his teeth from contact with water. In the pond on the first night he may see an animal, which becomes his personal protector, or he may dream of it. But not all boys have this vision which makes them doctors.

#### SHAMANISM.

A shaman's power rests ultimately upon the protecting animal or spirit sought and acquired at puberty; but a shaman's business, both malevolent and beneficent, at least so far as disease is concerned, is with the "pains"; minute, animate, and motile objects of nonhuman shape. Sickness is caused by pains which have been snapped or shot at people by hostile shamans. The curing doctor frequently swallows the pain after extracting or catching it. All these beliefs as to pains are typical of the northwestern tribes. There were women doctors, as in the northwest, but men on the whole had greater powers.

Pains grow ferocious after causing a death, and the shaman who has sent one out is under particular care to catch and subdue it, lest he fall its next victim. Sometimes a pain will be sent against a village instead of a person. It then buries itself in the ground near the settlement, spreading disease about, until found, extracted, and made harmless, or, like an unexploded grenade, dispatched on a return missile of death. Disease, it appears, is as wholly due to shamanistic power as is cure. The doctor is not a protector against the miscellaneous forces of evil, but himself the dispenser of death as well as life. That killing was frequently resorted to when reprisal by magic failed or was beyond reach follows naturally; and even a doctor who had lost enough of his own friends under his treatment was under so dark a cloud as to run much risk of being murdered. With his death, all his controlled pains died, too.

It is clear that, as among the tribes to the west, the idea of the "pain" was so vividly held and fully worked out by the Achomawi

that it had taken upon itself many of the functions elsewhere attributed to the guardian spirit. Thus an extracted pain can be made to tell a shaman who it was that sent it. The Achomawi, it is true, have better preserved the idea of the familiar spirit than the Shasta or the Yurok; but it appears to be preserved in theory rather than in shamanistic practice, which is pervaded throughout by concepts of the animate pain object.

A special feature of Achomawi shamanism is a sort of fetish called *kaku*, a bunch of feathers growing in remote places, rooted in the world, and when secured, dripping constant blood. The doctor uses his *kaku* in treating the sick, consults it as an oracle in locating the bodily hiding place of foreign pains, and obtains from it his own pains that are to travel on errands of destruction. It is possible that the *kaku* is a modification of the cocoon rattle, which through most of California was specifically a shaman's implement of special supernatural virtue, and which not infrequently had feathers lightly or abundantly interspersed among its rattles.

#### MYTHOLOGY.

Achomawi mythology is of central Californian type in its formal organization and recognition of dual and contrasting creators, but lacks something of the spirituality of the Maidu and Wintun systems in having an animal, the Silver Fox, as the planner and maker of the world, in place of a more anthropic and remote deity. The northwestern tone is entirely lacking from Achomawi myths, without a compensating distinctive character of their own.

#### PLACE OF THE CULTURE.

Achomawi culture may be described as possessing nearly as much of the elementary groundwork of northwestern as of central Californian civilization, but without any of the refinements and advanced specializations of the former and without the flavor of the peculiar social attitudes of the great north Pacific coast culture, and as being infiltrated with eastern, perhaps in part specifically Plains, influences, which seem to have come in more by way of the Columbia River than through the Shoshoneans of the Great Basin.

#### THE ATSUGEWI.

The Atsugewi, the sixth and last of the Shastan groups, lived on three medium-sized streams draining northward into Pit River: Burney Creek, Hat Creek, and Dixie Valley or Horse Creek. The mouths of these streams, like all the banks of the Pit River itself, were in Achomawi territory. The rather unfavorable stretches between the three creeks; the territory to some distance to the southeast, probably including the region of Eagle Lake; and the higher

country south to Lassen Peak and to the watershed between the Pit and Feather Rivers were used by the Atsugewi for hunting and the collecting of vegetable foods. They lay claim to having owned Susan River about as far down as Susanville, and Horse Lake east of Eagle Lake—territories which on Plate 1 have been credited to the Maidu and Northern Paiute, respectively. The neighbors of the Achomawi on the south were the Maidu, on their north the Achomawi, to the east the Northern Paiute, and on the west the Yana. There were Achomawi farther down on Pit River than the entrances of the Atsugewi streams, but the distance in this direction from the Atsugewi to the uppermost Wintun was not great.

Atsugewi or Atsugei is either their own name for themselves or that which the Achomawi apply to them. In the former case it probably referred only to the inhabitants of Hat Creek Valley; in the latter and more probable event—the ending *-wi* occurs on most Achomawi group designations where Atsugewi has *-wi*—the name may have been that of the whole people. But Adwanuhdji has also been cited as the Achomawi designation of the entire Atsugewi mass. The resident whites, at any rate, class them all together as Hat Creeks. The Yana call them Chunoya or Chunoyana.

Among themselves, the Burney Valley people were the Wamari'i, those of Dixie Valley the Apwarukei, while the specific name of those on the larger and middle stream, Hat Creek, is not known. Among the Achomawi, Apamadji denoted the Burney, Amidji or Amitsi the Dixie, and Hadiuwi the Hat Creek division. Pakamali or Bakamali has also been cited as the Achomawi name of this last division.

The population by the census of 1910 was not quite 250, nine-tenths of them still full blood. This purity has been maintained through the fortune of a sparse American settlement.

They were friendly with the Northeastern Maidu of Big Meadows and with most of the Yana, but possessed the repute of bravery.

All that is known of Atsugewi customs and beliefs points to their practical identity with those of the Achomawi. The following are the chief known items of discrepancy or corroboration.

The Atsugewi made the usual central Californian headband of yellow-hammer quills. It was worn by shamans in doctoring. The Achomawi used this ornament less or only sporadically. The former observed some sort of rudimentary mourning dance, in which the dead man's weapons were carried and dust was thrown up by handfuls. This seems, however, to have been a ceremony at the time of funeral, not a commemoration. The shaman's *kaku* was used as by the Achomawi.

To the Achomawi practice of a widow wearing her severed hair as a belt, the Atsugewi added the reciprocal custom of a man cutting his, though the belt made from it was put on by a female relative and not by himself.

The first deer killed during the camping season was eaten clean up without remnants or waste in order to please the mountain, which would then provide more deer.

Private or family ownership in land or its products is denied by the Atsugewi except for a few claims to particular patches of edible roots or seeds, and to eagles' nests, the right to take from which went from father to son.<sup>1</sup>

The ghost dance of 1870-1872 came to the Atsugewi from the west, from the northern Yana, who derived it from the northern Wintun. The Atsugewi transmitted it eastward to the Fall River Achomawi.

The dead were buried, so far as direct memory of the living extends. There is a tradition that corpses were originally cremated, subsequently put into rock crevices and covered with stones, and only in latter times interred. It is not clear whether this is authentic tradition or mythical speculation, nor whether it refers to the Atsugewi or other groups.

The summer or camping house was of cedar-bark slabs, leaned on a conical support of four poles tied near the top. One recent example, 16 feet in diameter, was occupied by three married couples and three children.

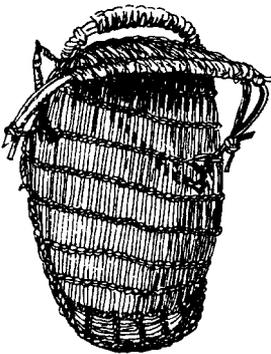


FIG. 26.—Atsugewi cradle.  
(Compare Pl. 35.)

The permanent or winter house was oval, with an entrance passage at one end and a main post nearer the opposite end. From this post three diagonal supports ran down to the rear and sides, while a pair of longer beams, laid parallel or nearly so, sloped gently to the door lintel. Between them, in front of the main post and above the fire, was the trapezoidal smoke hole, which also served as roof door. The skeleton of the house was laid over with bark and had earth put on. Money beads were planted and a prayer spoken before the main post was set. The house owner obtained the chief's approval before construction; several families lived under his roof. A house still standing measures 22 feet in greatest diameter. Chiefs' houses were larger. They were used in winter for joint sweat-

ing by the men of the settlement, the women and children taking themselves out each time.

Sweat houses as such are said to have been made only in the summer settlements or camps. They were small, earth-covered, and heated with steam, not by a fire. The eastern sweat house of blankets over a willow frame was introduced among the Atsugewi within the recollection of middle-aged people.

Deerskin clothing was similar to that described for the Shasta and Achomawi: hip-length leggings and a shirt with open sleeves for men, and for women either a skirt from waist to knee or a sleeveless gown from shoulder to knee. It is, however, specified that this was the costume of the well-to-do, worn in winter. The ordinary woman's skirt was rolled or bundled bast, sewn or twined into a mat; the poor man tied a tule mat about his trunk in cold weather and contented himself with a knee-length tule legging. Tule moccasins were worn mostly by women, three-piece deerskin ones by men; for winter use, the latter had the hair left on the inner side. A sort of glove was made by winding a strip of rabbit fur about palm, wrist, and forearm. These devices reflect the fact that the Achomawi and Atsugewi habitat was one of the coldest inhabited winter tracts in California. (Fig. 26.)

<sup>1</sup> This and the following notes are from data obtained by E. Golomshtok in 1922.