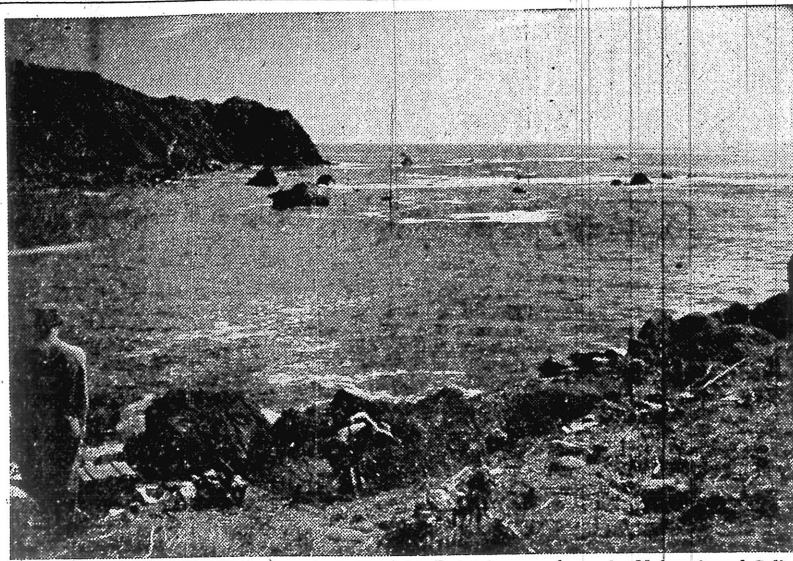


# Relics of Early Indian Days Unearthed in Humboldt



Excavation of the shell mound at Patrick's Point by men from the University of California last summer. The men dig where once the Indians camped to hunt sea lions, sea otter, and seals. (Photo by George Waldner.)

## Artifacts and Bones May Shed New Light on Past Humboldt Indian Culture

By GEORGE BESHORE

A relatively unknown Indian burial ground near Freshwater lagoon was recently uncovered by the highway department working on the job of building a new highway down the hill from the old, across the narrow sandspit that separates the lagoon and ocean, and back to the regular Highway 101 further along.

It is relatively unknown because the Indians of this region had heard of it and told certain white men—who had become friends with the Indians. But the builders of the highway did not know that it lay directly on their right-of-way until huge bulldozers began uncovering the bones of Indians.

When the department learned that it was moving through an old Indian burial ground, a special work order was put out directing that records be kept and the bones reinterred off the right of way of the new highway. This was done, and the notes as well as samples of the few cultural materials, such as grinding bowls and a bone spoon, known to archeologists as artifacts, were retained for inspection by the University of California, which is attempting to gain some insight into the history of Indians in this region.

These new discoveries will go with those made last summer, when a party from the university dug into a mound where an Indian village once stood at Patrick's Point. A third excavation, made in 1918 on Gunther's Island, completes the list of inquiries into the culture and nature of Humboldt's Indians back in the days when the redwoods waved gently and the fishing was good along Humboldt Bay—the days before the white man had discovered or exploited this part of California.

Although Indian culture in Southern and Central California is well known and many expeditions have excavated remains of the Indian culture before and through the time of the coming of the white man, the Indian culture in Northern California, and particularly through the mountainous forests of Humboldt, remains almost a mystery. But the pre-white man period of Humboldt is a story as fascinating as that of the south, in many respects, as far as archeologists can determine from their scattered investigations.

The story of the Indian in Humboldt before the coming of the white man is one of struggle against nature and acceptance of the bounty of it. Along the coast, the Indians found many fish; in the woods they found much game, and throughout the region they found difficulty of transportation. And the Indians left the land as they found it. There is no evidence that they cut out any of the forest, destroyed the game and fish, or in any way exploited the land for their leisure use.

So Humboldt still had the towering redwoods and the abundant fish and game that the Indians found here when the white man came into the region. Small wonder they resented the intrusion of this race that wanted to cut trees, remove fish and game faster than it grew back, and in general, take more than was needed so they could ship it out to other sections of the country.

In the investigation of the people's culture, the Patrick's Point and the Freshwater lagoon project stand out. At Patrick's Point the archeological party, headed by Dr. Robert F. Heizer, assistant professor of anthropology and director of the California Archeological Survey, University of California, excavated an old village site once inhabited by Yuroks. At Freshwater lagoon, Norman Worley, highway engineer, took charge of the project, which consisted of excavating the part of an old Indian burial ground that lay in the path of the new highway. At Patrick's Point, many objects of the Indian culture were removed and the remains of only six Indians were found. At Freshwater lagoon, the remains of 21 Indians were removed and reburied off the right-of-way, and only a few cultural objects were taken out.

At Patrick's Point, the scientists dug into layers of villages and found evidences of Yurok culture that go back at least 500 and possibly 1000 years. No pre-Yurok culture was found, Dr. Heizer reports, leaving the conclusion that they were the first people to enter this region and that their entry was comparatively recent when judged by geological time. The Patrick's Point expedition could not date its findings, and it is possible that the first Indians entered this region only a few hundred years ago. It is also possible that they had been here a thousand years when the white man came to Humboldt

in 1850, but even that length of time makes the Indian culture of Humboldt comparatively new compared with other sections of the United States.

The site at Patrick's Point consists of a thick area of accumulated living debris made up of shells, of several types of fish, bones of elk, seal and sea lion, and some fireplaces. The scientists estimate that this village site was occupied by Indians from ancient times up to about the beginning of the nineteenth century. It is possible that it is the site designated by the Yuroks as O-le'im and remembered as the spot where they camped when hunting sea lions on Turtle Rocks, which lie about a mile offshore. This is pure speculation by Dr. Heizer, however, and he hastens to point out that it should not be taken as a concrete fact.

A little material from the time after contact between the white man and Indians was found in a spot near the surface of the deposit, so it seems logical to conclude that the village site had long been abandoned and is to be considered a prehistoric town whose former importance has passed from the memory and tradition of the living Indians.

Among the artifacts found at Patrick's Point were wedges of elk antler used in splitting wood. In all, 48 such wedges were found.

Harpoon heads, used for spearing sea lion, seal, sea otter, and salmon were relatively abundant. The heavy sea lion harpoon heads are heavy and average about six inches long and one-half inch thick. Two heavy barbs along the side of the harpoon held the head fast to the animal's body, and a triangular flint point was used. Bone awls, needles, and fishhooks were also found in the Patrick's Point excavation. Dishes and bowls made of stone and flint scrapers, drills, and knives were also found.

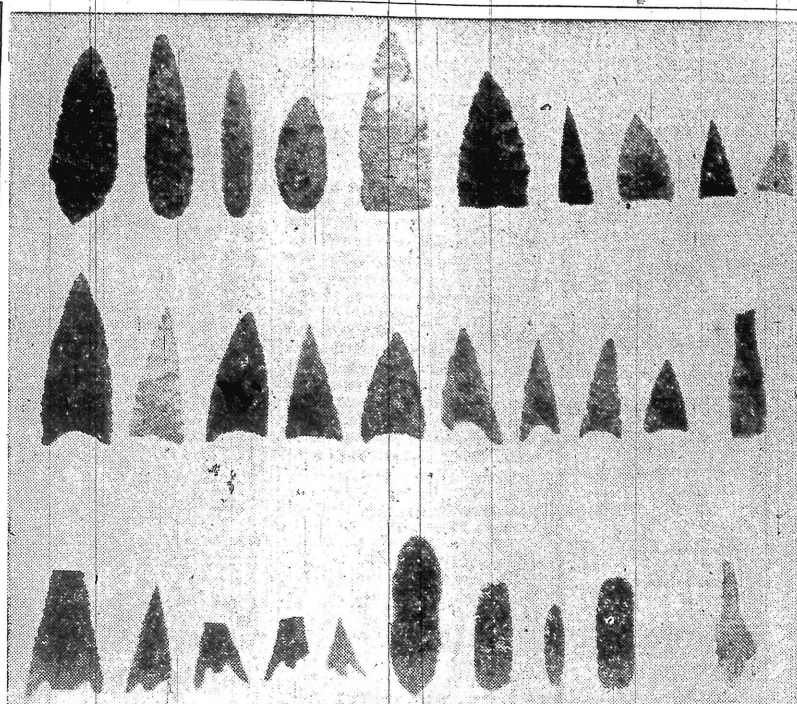
Ceremonial objects such as two small blunt-ended and constricted center chipped obsidian pieces, which are minatures of the big blades used for display in ceremonies of the recent Yurok tribes, were found. Another local form of ground stone, probably also for displaying as a wealth item in sacred dances, is the animal-form club known as the "slave killer," although there is no indication that it was used for the purpose from which it derives its name, that the Yuroks had slaves.

In the deposits near the surface, objects indicating contact with the white man appear. Parts of the two brass gunpowder flasks and the iron portions of a short double barreled cap and ball pistol besides some fragments of iron barrel hopping and a single glass trade bead were located. From this Dr. Heizer concludes that the village terminated about 1850 at the latest and was not occupied around 1800 because no evidences of Spanish, American, English, or Russian trading and exploring voyagers are to be found.

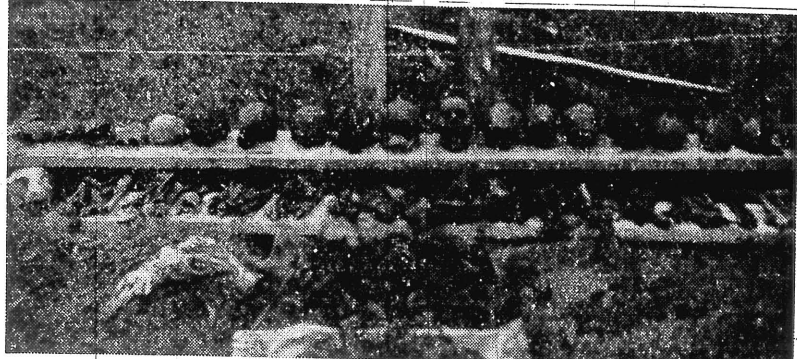
No archeologists were on hand to interpret the artifacts found at the burial site on the hill overlooking the north part of Freshwater lagoon, but the highway department kept careful notes before reburying the remains that were dug up. Dr. H. D. MacGinitie of Humboldt State college has examined a few of the bones and the artifacts which are now being sent to the University of California.

At Freshwater lagoon, the general appearance of the site indicates that there are two distinct burial grounds. One is 200 to 400 years old and the other one less than 200 years old, Dr. MacGinitie reports. The probing by the highway workers, under the direction of Engineer Norman Worley, began May 11. Altogether, 21 skeletons were found by the diggers on the highway right-of-way. Only a few artifacts were located, however.

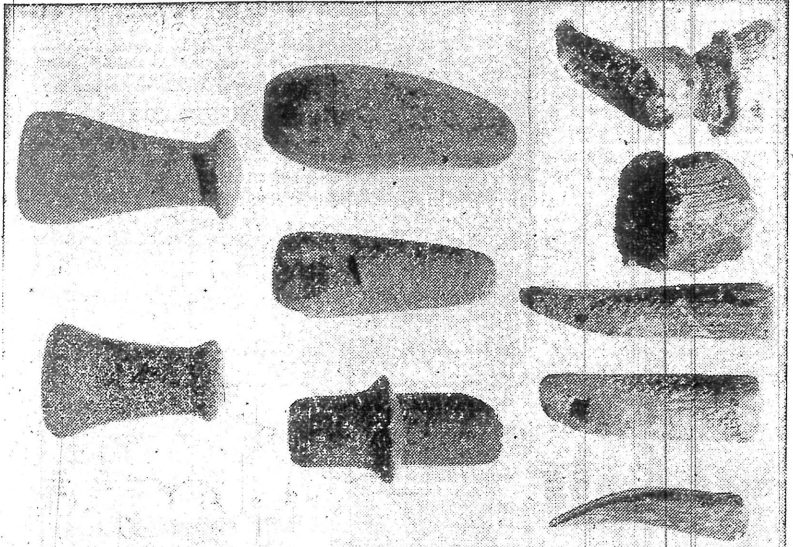
Also apparently Yurok Indians, the burial grounds seem to be located where a battle took place as all but one of the skeletons was that of an adult and about half of them were buried face down with two or three in one



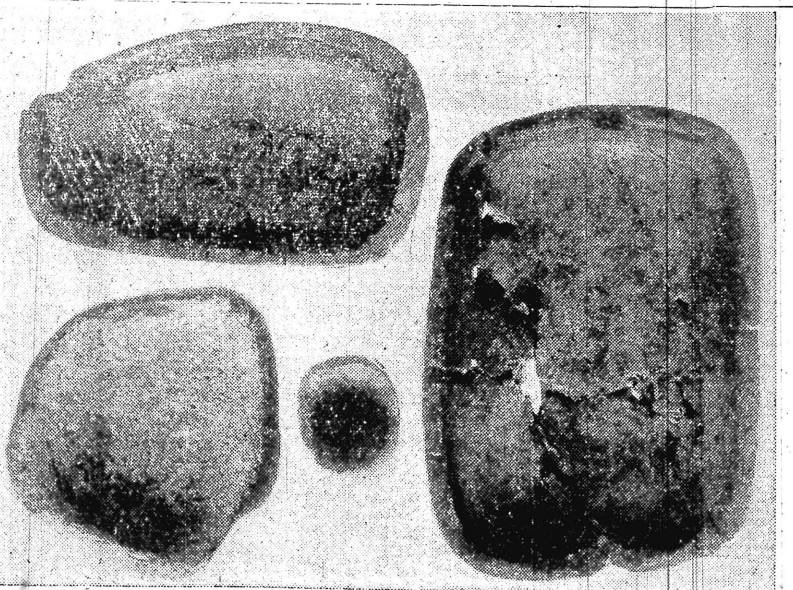
Arrowheads, harpoon heads, drills, and stone knives found at Patrick's Point site. (Photo by University of California, Department on Anthropology.)



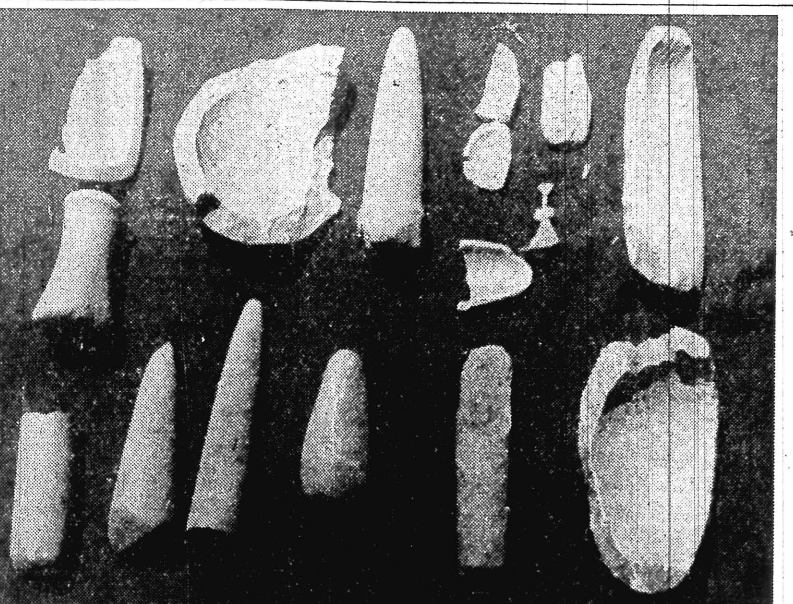
Skulls and other bones that were removed from the burial ground at Freshwater lagoon. This photograph was taken before the remains were re-buried by the highway department. (Photo by Normal Worley of the Highway Department.)



Antler wedges (bottom three at right), grinding mauls, and stone maul for driving antler wood splitting wedge (top at left.) Photo by University of California, Department of Anthropology.



Soapstone bowls found in the Patrick's Point shellmound. (Photo by University of California, Department of Anthropology.)



Grinding bowls and mortars found at Freshwater lagoon burial site. Most of artifacts are broken. Note bone spoon at upper right of picture's center.

the remains of enemies as they were often disposed of in this manner after falling in battle. These are believed to be Most of the skeletons at Freshwater lagoon were found buried between two slabs of redwood bark and many of them were buried under horse's bones and one under an elk. It was an Indian custom to bury a fallen warrior with his horse, so the belief that a battle may have taken place is strengthened.

Among the newer graves were found remains of Indians apparently buried since the white man came into this region a century ago. In the chest cavity of one skeleton was found buttons like those used today. Another skull had what appeared to be a bullet hole through it. Few artifacts were found at the Freshwater lagoon burial ground. The few that were located consisted of several hollowed out stone bowls, stone mortars used for grinding, and two bone spoons. Other artifacts that might help determine the time and type stood on the top of the hill overlooking Freshwater lagoon. This site has never been excavated, and it is probably there that the artifacts are to be found.

It is believed by all archeologists that the Indians who inhabit this area came in from the north, moving down the coast and down streams that originate in Trinity county. The Patrick's Point excavation and the burial ground at Freshwater lagoon shed interesting light on the peoples who roamed Humboldt's forests before the coming of the white man.

The history of the pre-white man Indian who lived in Northern California before a century ago is still dark. But one by one these excavations reveal the type of people who were our predecessors in this area, their customs, beliefs and activities—in short, their culture.

### Samoa Man Arrested On Burglary Charges

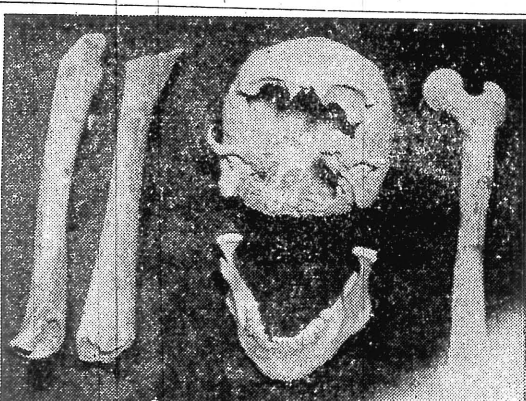
Charged with burglary, Grover D. Spears of Samoa was yesterday arrested by sheriff's officers and booked at the Humboldt county jail.

Spears is charged with burglarizing the Hammond Lumber company store at Samoa.

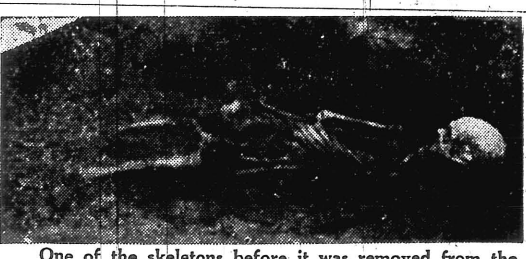
### Bayside Man Arrested For Drunken Driving

Charles W. Paul, 30-year-old resident of Bayside, was arrested for driving while intoxicated yesterday and booked at the Humboldt county jail at 1:30 p. m.

Paul was arrested on highway 101 between Eureka and Arcata by officers of the state highway patrol.



A skull, lower jaw, and other bones found at the Freshwater lagoon burial site.



One of the skeletons before it was removed from the ground at the Freshwater lagoon burial site. (Photo by Normal Worley of the Highway Department.)

### 4-H Members See Trapping Movie

The West End 4-H club were shown a moving picture entitled "Trapping" in the Warren Creek school. Thursday, the program sponsored by the fish and game commission.

Captain Leslie Lahr, of the fish and game wardens, and Alec Warren, trapper, exhibited the picture and commented upon the scenes, including the trapping of coyotes and bobcats. Ten 4-H club members and nine adults attended the meeting.

As a community project the club decided to erect a safety on the north side of the school grounds, which is near a cliff on the south side of Mad river. Work of erecting the fence will be done on Saturday, June 18, and celebrated Sunday, June 19, at a parent's picnic.

Walter Fieg, assistant farm advisor, stressed the importance of early entries for the Ninth District fair at Redwood Acres, June 22-26. Games only the Sunday night scores can tell.

### Officials Will Inspect Roads

The highway inspection trip by state highway authorities of the North Coast highways will definitely take place August 1 to 5, Frank W. Luttrell, chairman of the North Coast highway committee of the California State Chamber of Commerce, announced yesterday.

This will follow a similar field survey in the Southern California region and will include Commissioners Sandelin and Warlow, and perhaps others, as well as Deputy State Highway Engineer Fred Grumm and other members from the staff from Sacramento, as well as our two district engineers and their staff.

Luttrell also said the state chamber committee is preparing an up-to-the-minute report upon the status of past and present state highway projects, and in conjunction with the Redwood Empire association, county officials and other groups, will work out a detailed schedule as well as agenda for the several conferences planned.