

Employee Gets Deed to Permanent Home

The Cause of the Indians' reticence was that Thomas Madden, an Indian service employee from Tejon, had gained personal title to the Tule River Farm in 1860 using state school warrants. The federal government was consequently obliged to rent the Tule River Farm, paying Madden the exorbitant sum of \$1,000 per year. The Indians wisely suspected that any permanent improvements on the land might not be theirs to enjoy.

To complicate the situation, in 1860, another Indian war was being fought by the U.S. Army, this time in the Owens Valley on the East side of the Sierras. There the Western Mono or Monache were resisting a mass invasion of miners into their territory made possible by the recent opening of an overland route from Fountain Springs through Linn's Valley. When the Owens Valley Indians were defeated, the number of people subsisting on the Tule River Farm nearly doubled. In 1864, the population consisted of 450 Tule River Indians and 350 Owens River Indians who were relocated there.

It was Tule River Indian labor that dug the Pioneer Ditch, the men digging with the women carrying away the dirt in baskets. The agent at Tule River wrote in 1868: "A large irrigating ditch, five miles in length, taking the water from Tule river, and a wagon road, 25 miles in length, to the pinery in the mountains, were constructed by G. L. Hoffman, former agent, by and with the labor of the Indians, with the expectation that the lands rented would be purchased by the government, and that those enterprises would be of great utility and benefit to the reservation".

The Government never purchased the Madden Farm. In 1863, it was given the status of a reservation, however, and all the Indians formerly at the Tejon Reservation and at a reservation near Ft. Miller on the Kings River were moved there.