



KOYOUE TUKADU:
PYRAMID LAKE PAIUTE KIT



◆ WE ARE ALL PEOPLE OF THIS EARTH

Truckee, known for having a great thinking mind and a large warm heart, was a member of the Northern Paiute band that roamed the Humboldt and Pyramid Lake areas. As an elder, Truckee taught his people many lessons of love and peace. He made a constant effort to keep these lessons strong throughout the tribe. Some of the lessons consisted of; always being kind to one another, always telling the truth and never taking for one’s self what belongs to another, treating elders with tender respect, caring for and helping the helpless, being affectionate in families and showing respect to women, especially to mothers.

When the first pioneers were seen in this land Truckee told the story of their lost brother and made everyone promise never to harm their “white brother”. In October 1844, The Truckee River was named after this man out of gratitude for his guidance of the Murphy-Stevens-Townsend party. The next year Truckee and twelve of his men escorted Captain Fremont over the Sierra-Nevada Mountains.

Truckee and his brother Pam Ma Hah (Wild Hay) became part of the California Battalion. This military unit, led by Fremont, fought to put settlers in the Mexican province - now California. During this time the natives took on the names of the men they worked for, so Truckee took on the name John Truckee after John Fremont. Pam Ma Hah took the name Pancho which later became the surname for his descendants. When the men came home they told their tales of California and the others they met along the way. Truckee told of how kind the “white man” was and of “what beautiful things their white brothers had”. He taught his people songs like the Star Spangled Banner and spoke to them in the English language.

In the fall, Chief Truckee and thirty of his men returned to California, leaving his son Old Winnemucca behind. The tribe always helped the emigrants that had to spend their winter by the Carson River, due to the amount of snow on the mountains, for they believed in sharing with those that are less fortunate. On his third trip Truckee took his family with him to California. This visit allowed them, including Sarah Winnemucca, to learn the English language and see a different way of life. Learning the English language became a significant asset that allowed for communication. The Paiutes that stayed behind were already beginning to experience hardships due to this different way of life. Although he mourned the deaths of many family members, Truckee reminded the tribe of the promise they made not to harm their “white brother”.

Truckee was known to be an honest and fair man filled with integrity. Truckee enjoyed having much of his native land named after him. Following his wishes, in the spring of 1860 when he died, Truckee was given a “white man’s burial” and his granddaughters were sent to a school created by settlers in California.

