

May 3, 1978

Elizabeth Mecham
Rt. #1, Box 416
Bayside, Ca. 95524

Dear Mrs. Mecham:

Thank you for the letter dated April 21. I appreciate your comments on wildflowers. There is a succession of flowers here, as some varieties wane, others take their place. A plant called "Snowballs" by a Tecopa Indian I met is proliferating West of the Museum. Last weekend it rained heavily at night and now it is clear and windy. The Inyos received a new sprinkling of snow in the last storm.

I have been going over all your correspondence; I find it interesting. Also it raises questions. You mentioned there are five or six Coso Indians left. Do you recall their names? If possible I would like to contact them.

I talked to Si Ness recently. He thinks George Gregory and Charlie Wrinkle may have come from South Fork (Tubatulabal Country) or perhaps their parents did. He thinks this because the vocabularies collected by Kerr seem unlike Coso Shoshone. But Kerr was not good at linguistics; he had trouble transcribing Indian words. Anything you can tell me about their parents would be helpful. Gregory, as I recall, says he was born in Darwin but may actually have had parents who originated somewhere else.

Do you know how I could reach Joe and Mabel Peterson's Gardens? I am doing a site inventory for the County Museum and would appreciate locations on this and other sites. Was Mabel Peterson a Coso Indian and where was she born? I know my questions are difficult but it is important to know where different Indians were born and to whom they were related. Any help you can give on Indian genealogy including maiden names of Indian women will help me untangle some of the mysteries of Inyo's American Indian

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history. With your help I would like to make a genealogical chart for the Indians in the Coso-Little Lake, Saline-Panamint area.

You mentioned that the Indians came to Millspaugh in summers. Did all the Indians come here in the summers in olden time or did different families winter and summer at different locations? Where did Coso Shoshone families spend their springs and autumns?

Do you recall large gatherings of Indians called fandangos?

I am also very interested in the Indian games as well as those played by the white people. I understand the Indians played a game called Pasee which required a rectangular playing field of packed dirt. Have you ever heard of it?

I am returning the original of a letter addressed to George Pipkin in 1964. I think you wanted it back.

Also I am enclosing a proof sheet of photos I took of sites in Darwin in 1977. Could you look them over with a magnifying glass and tell me anything about them? They should be numbered from left to right, just the way print is read. In this way I won't confuse your comments if you have any.

Thank you for your continuing interest, patience and time.

Sincerely,

Charles N. Irwin, Director
Eastern California Museum

CNI/vac

enclosures