



“By the Aid of His Indians”: Native Negotiations of Settler Colonialism in Marin County, California, 1840–70

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Abstract

As archaeology turns to the study of sustained colonialism, researchers are reassessing sites occupied by Native people from the mid-nineteenth century onward. In California, this was a particularly crucial time, with many Indigenous people creating social and economic ties with newcomers in order to maintain connections to their ancestral homelands. One such locale was Toms Point, a landform on Tomales Bay, where Coast Miwok people worked at a trading post run by an American entrepreneur. This article explores the material evidence for their engagement with a broad array of social and economic connections, including the California coastal trade, the salvage of a local shipwreck, and persistent Indigenous exchange networks.

Keywords Networks · Native Californians · Settler Colonialism · California

Introduction

Since the 1990s, the field of historical archaeology has embraced the study of Native American communities in colonial settings (Rubertone 2000). Recent work, in particular, includes collaborative approaches that demonstrate Indigenous persistence across

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an expanding range of temporal and spatial contexts (e.g., Gould et al. 2019; Law Pezzarossi and Sheptak 2019). Crucially, this research provides detailed material evidence of how Native people strategically incorporated new technologies, wage labor, and social relationships with colonists to maintain communities and connections to homelands. These findings counter the myth of the vanishing Indian and can be used to support tribal sovereignty and ongoing efforts toward federal recognition (Cipolla 2013; Mrozowski et al. 2009; Tveskov 2007).

The historical archaeology of Native Americans in California generally follows these developments. While the first wave of research examined Native contexts at Euroamerican institutions, such as missions and forts (Allen 1998; Lightfoot 2005), emerging approaches—many of them conducted in collaboration with living communities—are provoking interest in how Indigenous people negotiated the shifting structures of sustained colonialism (Lightfoot and Gonzalez 2018b; Panich 2019; Schneider 2019). Accordingly, researchers are moving beyond the early colonies established by agents of Spain, Russia, and Mexico to examine how Native people built on previous colonial entanglements to work within and against American settler colonialism from the 1840s onward. Like ethnohistorical studies that demonstrate how Native Californians confronted settler colonialism and capitalist economies through wage labor and intermarriage (Bauer 2016; Phillips 2010; Sousa 2015), this work explicitly considers how Native people made do in emerging capitalist settings, with varying implications for identity, land tenure, and federal acknowledgment (Lightfoot and Gonzalez 2018a; Sunseri 2017).

Native Californians have been contending with colonial intrusions for more than four centuries. The mid-nineteenth century, however, stands out as a particularly important time. It was during this period, beginning in the 1820s, that previous colonial powers—namely, Russia, Spain, and later, Mexico—lost their claims to the region. By the late 1840s, the United States annexed California, which became a state in 1850, ushering in the full brunt of settler colonialism and dramatically changing the colonial structures that Native people were forced to contend with. Here, we examine the material evidence for Native Californians living along Tomales Bay, a tidal estuary north of San Francisco in what is today Marin County. We focus on a trading post occupied by Native Californians and an American merchant (ca. 1840–70) at a landform called Toms Point (Fig. 1). Our results indicate that Native people at the Toms Point trading post negotiated the shifting circumstances of the time by maintaining existing connections to ancestral territories and neighboring Native groups while simultaneously engaging with Euroamerican economic networks of the mid-nineteenth century. Expanding the analysis to include contemporary Indigenous sites in the greater Tomales Bay region, we argue that Native Californians pursued various options under settler colonial regimes.

Colonial Entanglements at Tomales Bay

From the vantage point of the Native people who lived at Toms Point in the mid-nineteenth century, colonial entanglements had long been a part of life. Their ancestors were among the first Native Californians to encounter Europeans, dating back to the sixteenth-century landfalls of Francis Drake and Sebastian Rodríguez Cermeño, which

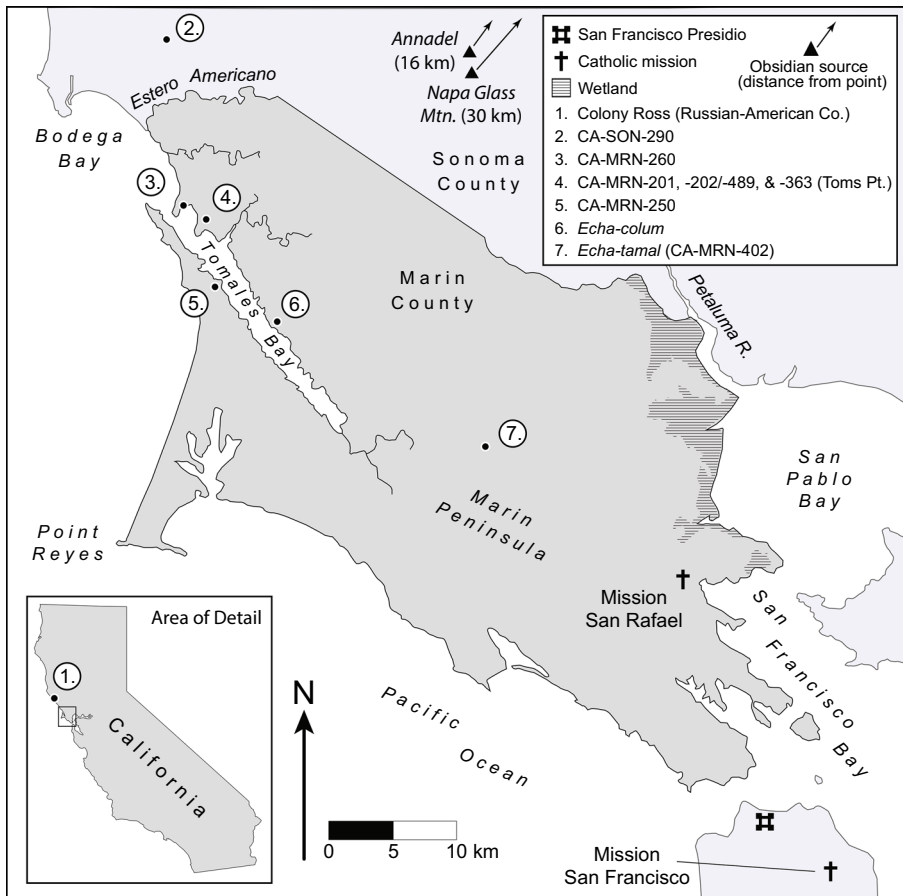


Fig. 1 Map of Tomales Bay and surrounding area, with approximate locations of sites mentioned in text

occurred at nearby Point Reyes in 1579 and 1595, respectively. European accounts of these early encounters describe gift exchanges with local Coast Miwok people as well as how Native individuals began eagerly stripping useful materials from Cermeño's ship, the *San Agustín*, which was lost in a storm (Lightfoot and Simmons 1998). Coast Miwok people made extensive use of the goods they acquired, specifically porcelain which they valued as a raw material for items such as beads or pendants, foreshadowing future encounters in the region (Russell 2011; Schneider 2017).

Europeans returned to the Tomales Bay region nearly two centuries later when Spain reconnoitered the region in advance of establishing missions and presidios in the greater San Francisco Bay area. As with the earlier encounters, physical objects—such as glass beads, cloth, and tobacco—figured prominently. These goods proved crucial to the successful navigation of coastal California, and eventually, in the recruitment of Native people to the missions (Cuthrell et al. 2016; Lacson 2015; O'Neil 1992). Importantly, material inducements did not mark the end of existing Indigenous technological traditions. Instead, archaeology at nearby Spanish mission sites—and at others across California—demonstrates that Native Californians incorporated new materials, such as glass beads, into existing systems of value. At the same time, the

evidence shows that they continued to produce and use an array of materials, such as shell beads and flaked and ground stone tools, that had important antecedents in precontact times (e.g., Allen 1998; Brown 2018; Panich 2014; Panich et al. 2018b).

Coast Miwok people from the Tomales Bay region were most prominent at Missions San Francisco de Asís and San Rafael, although Coast Miwoks were also in residence at Missions San José and San Francisco Solano. Others remained in their ancestral homelands—including the village of *Seglogue*, which we discuss below—avoiding missionization while maintaining an intentionally low profile (Schneider 2015b; Schneider and Panich 2019). Still others looked north to Colony Ross, run by the Russian-American Company from 1812 to 1841. There, Native laborers faced challenges to their autonomy but suffered fewer attempts at direct enculturation, compared to their compatriots in the mission system. These patterns are visible in the archaeology of the Native Californian and Native Alaskan neighborhoods at Colony Ross, including the use of introduced goods alongside those available locally or through regional Indigenous connections (Lightfoot 2005).

As we further elaborate below, Tomales Bay served as an important refuge for Coast Miwok people after the collapse of the missions and Colony Ross, in the 1830s and 1840s. Like other Native Californians, they returned to their homeland where they recreated communities or joined existing ones to regroup amid the violence and tumult that accompanied California's entry into the United States (Nelson 2019). One locale within the broader constellation of mid-nineteenth-century sites along Tomales Bay was Toms Point, our archaeological case study (see Fig. 1). There, an American named George Thomas Wood (popularly known as "Tom Vaquero") married a local Coast Miwok woman and established a trading post at the eponymous Toms Point. This outpost lasted for a generation, roughly 1840–1870, during the pivotal period in which the political and economic control of California shifted from the uncertainties of the 1840s to consolidated American rule. In this milieu, Coast Miwok people hosted Euroamerican traders and representatives of other tribal communities for a range of economic, ceremonial, and recreational events (Schneider 2018; Schneider and Panich 2019).

Despite increasing attention to sustained colonialism, two interrelated challenges remain for interpreting sites like the Toms Point trading post. The introduction of mass-produced material culture in the mid-nineteenth century presents methodological complications for the archaeological study of Native-lived colonialism, at the same time that many observers have seen the closing of the first generation of colonial establishments as marking an end to local Indigenous history (Lightfoot 2006; Lightfoot and Gonzalez 2018b; Panich 2019; Schneider 2019; Silliman 2010). Indeed, centuries of local histories steeped in terminal narratives firmly established the myth of the vanishing Indian across North America (Bauer 2016; Mancini 2015; O'Brien 2010). In such accounts, Native people faded into the past in the face of supposedly superior ways of life.

These national tropes extend to the Pacific Coast and the Tomales Bay region, where one local history, published originally in the 1930s, uses the language of white supremacy to frame the interactions between Native people and American settlers (Dickinson 1993). Others, however, show cracks in the façade of Manifest Destiny. In particular, we point to a seemingly offhand acknowledgment that Tom Vaquero's economic venture was possible only "by the aid of his Indians" (Munro-Fraser

1880:123). As this early observer no doubt understood, but so many others were loath to admit, the success of settler colonialism was not a given. Rather, as the archaeological record demonstrates, Native Californians—like those living at Toms Point—made different choices about how best to weather their newfound circumstances. While some of their neighbors held out against the Americans, the residents of Toms Point and other places along Tomales Bay used social and economic ties to settlers to ensure their own connections to the landscape during a time of great upheaval.

Archaeological Research

Research focusing on the mid-nineteenth-century trading post at Toms Point began in 2015, consisting of two field seasons of targeted excavations and ongoing laboratory analysis (see Schneider et al. 2018:55). Field investigations centered on the main site of the trading post (CA-MRN-202) and included ground penetrating radar survey, a systematic surface collection, auger probes, and 11 m² of controlled excavation. We also examined an existing collection taken from the intertidal zone of Tomales Bay adjacent to the trading post (Gerkin 1967). This concentration of materials has its own trinomial (CA-MRN-489) but appears to be part of MRN-202 that washed into the bay over the course of the past two centuries (Panich et al. 2018c:160–161). Two other sites exist on Toms Point: CA-MRN-201 and CA-MRN-363. We conducted systematic surface collection at both sites as well as a single 1x1 m test unit at MRN-363.

Radiocarbon dates from MRN-363 and diagnostic leaf-shaped projectile points at MRN-489 indicate precontact Coast Miwok occupation of the landform going back at least 4,000 years (Gerkin 1967; Panich et al. 2018d). More difficult to parse, however, are deposits that include both mass-produced objects and those that were used in the late precontact period. Indeed, sites MRN-202/489 and MRN-201 both exhibit a mixture of artifacts that clearly date to the nineteenth century as well as materials, like corner-notched projectile points, that are typically associated with precontact periods in local archaeological chronologies. As discussed elsewhere, these types of co-occurrences are often identified as multicomponent sites (e.g., a Euroamerican homestead at the site of a precontact Native shell midden), much to the detriment of our understanding of long-term patterns of Indigenous presence and persistence (Panich and Schneider 2019).

At Toms Point, our research—including radiocarbon dating and stratigraphic analysis—indicates that the excavated deposits at MRN-202, the main trading post site, date exclusively to the nineteenth century. Earlier deposits are present in a non-contiguous stratigraphic layer, and materials from these two discrete occupations are mixed in the collections from MRN-489. Site MRN-201 has two loci, one which dates to precontact times and one which appears to be primarily from the nineteenth century, although our dating for this particular site is based solely on surface manifestations. Given their chronological contemporaneity and spatial proximity (MRN-201 is approximately 400 m south of MRN-202), we consider the two sites as potentially related. Site MRN-363 appears to date exclusively to precontact times.

Negotiating Settler Colonialism

The trading post at Toms Point presents an opportunity to use archaeology to examine Native Californian strategies of autonomy and persistence at the very onset of American settler colonialism. Based on limited ethnohistorical information from period maps and later local histories, we know that the site was occupied by George Wood, his Coast Miwok wife, and an untold number of other Native people during the period between roughly 1840 and 1870. That Toms Point remained a distinctly Native place is underscored by its routine description as a rancheria, the common term for Native villages in California (Panich et al. 2018c; Schneider and Panich 2019). Yet we lack detailed insight into the lives of the site's residents, beyond the observation that the overall arrangement described in the historical record parallels that adopted by other Native Californians who saw intermarriage and wage labor as a way to sustain their communities in the early years of settler colonialism (Bauer 2016; Sousa 2015; Sunseri 2017). Given our inference that the Native residents of the Toms Point trading post viewed their participation in the economic venture as a way to stay connected to their ancestral homeland, we structure our discussion of the archaeological data along the connections that the site's occupants maintained to various economic and social networks.

Long-Term Indigenous Networks

One of the key insights of recent archaeological research in colonial California is that Indigenous people maintained an array of social, ceremonial, and economic connections, albeit in partially modified forms, despite the constraints of Euroamerican colonialism. Much of this research has focused on countering the carceral, or prison-like, image of the region's Franciscan missions that characterizes much historical scholarship and that inadvertently supports narratives of Indigenous erasure (Arkush 2011; Byrd et al. 2018; Lightfoot et al. 2009; Panich and Schneider 2015; Ruby and Whitaker 2019; Schneider 2015a, 2015b; Schneider and Panich 2014). Comparatively less attention is paid to the continuation of these networks into the more recent past, but the post-mission period is critical for our understanding of how Native Californians used enduring connections to people and places to weather the structures of settler colonialism (Schneider 2019).

Coast Miwok people lived at Toms Point for thousands of years before the arrival of Europeans, building various regional connections to their neighbors. As documented in the sacramental registers from Mission San Rafael, the landform—then known as *Seglogue*—was home to individuals from multiple village communities who drew on existing relationships to create a refuge from missionary colonialism (Schneider and Panich 2019). While the exact connection between the mission-era residents of *Seglogue* to those Native people who lived and worked at the mid-nineteenth-century trading post is unclear, Toms Point remained an important node in the regional Indigenous landscape. According to one early observer, the trading post was “the rendezvous of all of the Indian tribes” in the region, including groups from Marin, Sonoma, and Solano counties (Lauff 2016 [1916]:54).

Obsidian Investigations at Toms Point recovered large quantities of obsidian artifacts, which were analyzed following the protocol outlined in Panich (2016). Native people at Toms Point relied primarily on two obsidian sources, Napa Valley and Annadel, which are approximately 65 and 40 km northeast of Toms Point, respectively. Traditionally, Napa Valley obsidian was within the territory of Wappo-speaking people while Annadel was within the homeland of Southern Pomo groups (Jackson 1986). At MRN-202, the main trading post site, we recovered 53 obsidian artifacts, of which 53% were Napa Valley compared to 45% Annadel (2% were from an unknown source). The collection from MRN-489 contained 208 diagnostic projectile points, which were almost evenly split between the two sources, with 49% from Napa Valley compared to 48.5% from Annadel. However, when the sample is restricted to point types most commonly associated with the late precontact and colonial periods (namely, Rattlesnake Corner-Notched and Stockton Series Points [Fig. 2]), the provenance data shifts dramatically in favor of Annadel (55% to 37%). The exact chronological placement of the points from MRN-489 is unclear (Origer 1982); yet, the data at hand suggest dynamic economic ties that transcend the prehistoric-historic divide.

In particular, our findings indicate the continuation of regional conveyance patterns into the mid-nineteenth century, with a strong reliance on both Annadel and Napa Valley obsidian. These sources (and minor quantities of other geological sources in our sample) are all found within the territories of other ethnolinguistic groups, suggesting that the Coast Miwok residents of Toms Point maintained economic relations with neighboring groups. These regional connections no doubt shifted under sustained colonialism, particularly with regard to the long-distance conveyance of obsidians from the eastern slope of the Sierra Nevada (which were never prevalent in our Tomales Bay



Fig. 2 Metal and obsidian artifacts from Toms Point. **a** cap for a mid-1850s gunpowder container and **b** percussion caps dating to the 1840s to 1860s. **c**, **d** corner-notched projectile point fragments, both manufactured from Annadel obsidian

study area). Yet, Native Californians nonetheless found ways to obtain obsidian artifacts and raw material in a diverse array of settings. Similar patterns are noted at Spanish mission sites in the southern San Francisco Bay area, at a Mexican-era rancho north of the bay, in post-Russian contexts near Colony Ross, and at important shellmound sites (Lightfoot and Gonzalez 2018a; Panich 2016; Panich et al. 2018b; Schneider 2015b; Silliman 2005). Like their neighbors throughout the region, the Native residents of Toms Point used existing Indigenous networks to maintain supplies of various sources of obsidian.

Shell Beads Shell beads and ornaments appear to have been in short supply at the Toms Point trading post. *Olivella biplicata* beads were collected from the surface of MRN-201 ($n = 1$) and from 40 to 50 cm below the ground surface at MRN-202 ($n = 1$). The bead from MRN-201 is a “punched spire-lopped” bead (Type A4), a variant of “simple spire-lopped” beads—nearly complete *Olivella* snail shells with the spire removed—produced over the past 9,000 years (Milliken and Schwitalla 2012:15–18). The *Olivella* bead from MRN-202 is also a large “oblique spire-lopped” (Type A2c) bead, characteristic of the Early Period (Milliken and Schwitalla 2012:17), or approximately 4000 to 5000 years ago (Fig. 3). Despite the great time depth associated with these beads, their association with two colonial-era sites may reflect the continued value associated with *Olivella* beads perhaps found and curated by later occupants of Toms Point.

Other modified marine shell artifacts include one abalone (*Haliotis rufescens*) button collected from the surface of MRN-202. It may represent evidence for the sale of abalone shells to French shipping merchants who, according to Munro-Fraser (1880:123), sought to turn a profit from the sale of the lustrous shells to international button manufacturers. Given the trading post’s close proximity to extensive and productive Tomales Bay clam beds, and considering a robust ethnography detailing Coast Miwok shell bead production into the twentieth century (Collier and Thalman 1996), the absence of clamshell disk beads or shell bead manufacturing debris in the archaeological assemblages from Toms Point is noteworthy. As the primary species of clam used for disk beads, Washington clam (*Saxidomus nutalli*) shell fragments were collected from MRN-201, -202, and -363 (see Schneider et al. 2018). Beads and bead manufacturing detritus are absent, however.

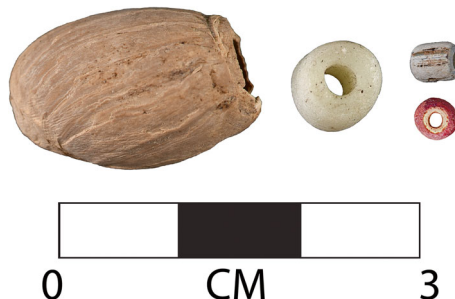


Fig. 3 Beads from MRN-202. Class A *Olivella* bead, white compound glass bead (IVa13), “candy striped” compound glass bead (IVa14), Cornaline d’Aleppo compound glass bead (IVa9)

Native Plants and Animals The Toms Point assemblages are replete with dietary marine shell fragments, fish and bird bones, and numerous native plant and animal taxa (see Schneider et al. 2018). Among the macrobotanical remains from MRN-202, the shells of acorn, hazelnut, and California bay are present, but in low densities. Even in small quantities, these edible nuts speak to a continued engagement of the Coast Miwok peoples living at Toms Point to their broader homelands. Oak, hazel, and California bay would not likely have grown on the sandy landform, and their presence in the archaeological record suggests an intentional choice to not only gather of food from elsewhere, but to bring those materials back to Toms Point for processing and consumption. The majority of macrobotanical remains from MRN-202 come from herbaceous grassland taxa such as plants in the Poaceae family, though these seeds likely would not have been used for food. Rather, these Poaceae seeds were largely comprised of taxa such as bedstraw which does not have any documented ethnobotanical uses but may signify the rapidly changing ecology on the Toms Point landform following the introduction of large domesticated grazing mammals to the region. While we cannot definitively link the herbaceous seeds recovered at Toms Point to food practices, several fragments of groundstone tools identified in the MRN-202 assemblage—including the pieces of a large straight-sided “show” mortar, diagnostic of late precontact times (Beardsley 1948)—offer indirect support for the continued importance of native plants as well as protracted technological traditions called upon to process these and other wild food resources.

Small numbers of the remains of marine mammals (sea otter and harbor seal), terrestrial carnivores (bobcat and mountain lion), mule deer, and rabbit are also represented in the zooarchaeological assemblages from MRN-202. Sea otter played a central role in the growth and intensity of the nineteenth-century maritime fur trade (Lightfoot 2005). Taphonomic marks consistent with pelt production, such as scored and snapped bones, were not identified, suggesting that the remains of these and other mammalian species more likely reflect past meals. Yet, with only one identifiable deer bone and a majority of rabbit bones appearing to belong to a single animal, we must consider additional roles for animals at Toms Point beyond foodways practices. A single phalanx from a bobcat and a mountain lion probably arrived onsite as part of pelts worn to keep warm on the cool California coast, and one carpometacarpus (wing bone) from a hawk might indicate the persistence of Coast Miwok ceremonial practices amid the daily grind of the hide and tallow trade.

Considering other food sources for the coastal enterprise, large quantities of marine shell—including bivalves (mussel and clam primarily) and gastropods—lead us to believe that intertidal resources and fishes were a regular fixture in the diets of Toms Point residents. They could, for example, take schooling fishes—surfperches, sardines, and herring—from the water surrounding Toms Point using nets cast from the shore. Fishing trips may have been combined with the collection of clams and abalone or hunting birds (geese, ducks, and diving birds), which could also be captured with nets, slings, and traps, as Charles Lauff (2016 [1916]:55) remembered of Indigenous hunters laboring at George Wood’s trading post.

Settler/Capitalist Networks

The residents of Toms Point were active participants in the burgeoning nineteenth-century coastal trade, which brought mass produced goods to California in exchange for furs, hides, tallow, and eventually gold. This trade had its origins in the early nineteenth century, when American and European merchants began regular voyages up and down the Pacific Coast of North America, illicitly peddling a similar suite of material goods to the Spanish, and later to Russian and Mexican colonists (Farris 1989:492; Iglar 2013:22–26). As Anglo-American settlers arrived in the region, they often integrated into Mexican California, opening localized opportunities for trade with ports all around the Pacific Basin. Indeed, nearly a thousand ships entered California's waters between 1786 and 1848, with more than half arriving after 1830 (Iglar 2013:25). During the Gold Rush of 1848–49, commerce increased even more rapidly. San Francisco quickly became the primary port through which foreign import trade was directed—attracting vessels from Asia, South America, Europe, and eastern North America—although local ports still remained important in supplying outlying areas and connecting them to markets (Delgado 2009; Layton 2002).

The Toms Point trading post began in the 1840s, before the centralization of trade at San Francisco. At that time, French traders would periodically drop anchor in Tomales Bay to acquire hides, tallow, and abalone shells (Munro-Fraser 1880:123). As recalled by one resident, Toms Point “was the shipping and trading point for all the Spanish, Russian, French and English trading coasters” (Lauff 2016 [1916]:54). Yet the racist sentiments of the time color most period accounts of how the site's Native inhabitants interacted with coastal merchants or what types of materials they may have obtained as residents or employees of the trading post. For example, one local history describes how French merchants supposedly plied Native people living at Toms Point with liquor and then virtually robbed them of their stock of abalone shells in exchange for “a few trinkets and gew-gaws” (Munro-Fraser 1880:124). Given these shortcomings, we can turn to the archaeological record for a deeper understanding of the kinds of materials that circulated among Native people involved in settler economic networks before and after the Gold Rush.

Firearms Despite the violence American settlers used against Native people in other parts of California, the evidence indicates that Coast Miwok residents of Toms Point likely had relatively regular access to firearms (see Fig. 2). Excavations at MRN-202 yielded eight percussion caps, all of which are pistol caps with ridged sides. These small caps measure approximately 4.7 mm (0.185 in.) in head diameter, and likely date to the 1840s–60s. Percussion caps are typically discarded at the time of firing, offering good spatial evidence of past discharge events (Weber and Scott 2006). All but one of the percussion caps from Toms Point appear to have been fired, indicating the frequent use of small arms near the site's core residential area. However, the condition of the caps precludes a detailed study of the number of firearms in use at the site.

The presence of lead stoppers for gunpowder containers also corresponds to the use of blackpowder firearms at the site. One lid—exhibiting a Civil War-era eagle motif—was recovered from excavation, while three others were found in the intertidal deposits. Among the latter group was one Dupont Company stopper identical to one found at a mid-1850s site in Oregon (Tveskov 2017). Lastly, several pieces of lead birdshot were

present, at least some of which may have been manufactured on site as suggested by multiple fragments of melted lead. All of the artifacts related to firearms are consistent with other mid-nineteenth-century sites in the western United States (Hardesty 1997:85–92; Silliman 2004:120–121; Tveskov 2017), but in this context speak directly to the use of firearms by Native Californians.

Glass Beads Although archaeologists initially recorded all of the sites at Toms Point as precontact in nature, observers have noted glass beads there for at least a century (Peter 1921). For our analysis, we focused on beads recovered in our work at MRN-202 and MRN-201, as well as those present in the collections from MRN-489 (Table 1, and see Fig. 3). Following regional trends, the most common beads are compound white-on-white beads of drawn manufacture. As noted elsewhere, the preponderance of white glass beads at sites occupied by Native Californians in central California likely reflects Indigenous peoples' preference for glass beads that exhibit a visual similarity to shell beads. In this way, glass beads highlight how Native consumers drove global markets in beads and other materials (Panich 2014; Panich et al. 2018a; Silliman 2004). Nevertheless, the common nature of white-on-white compound beads, along with red-on-green compound beads, makes it difficult to connect individual bead types to specific colonial agents or economic networks. These popular beads, moreover, likely also traveled along Indigenous networks, perhaps moving outward from missions and related sites in exchange for obsidian and other raw materials (Arkush 2011; Panich and Schneider 2015).

Other beads from Toms Point may be more diagnostic. Take, for example, the ten wound red-on-yellow beads from the MRN-489 collection. Meighan (2020) included

Table 1 Glass beads from sites at Toms Point

Bead Type/Color	Toms Point sites			Bead numbers after Kidd and Kidd (2012)
	MRN-201	MRN-202	MRN-489	
<i>Simple drawn beads (Ia/IIa)</i>				
White	1	15	7	IIa14
Black		2		IIa7
Other		1	2	Ia11, IIa2, IIa56
<i>Compound drawn beads (IVa)</i>				
White-on-white	5	39	1	IVa11, IVa13
Red-on-white		6	10	IVa9
Red-on-green	1	1	2	IVa6
Red-on-blue			2	IVa8
Other drawn compound		1	1	IVa1, IVa14
<i>Wound beads</i>				
Red-on-yellow			10	WIIIa
Monochromatic		2		Wb12, W1c
Red-on-white		1		WIIIa
Total	7	68	35	

these distinctive beads in his unpublished California glass bead typology, originally formulated in the mid-twentieth century. Dubbed Type 19, these beads are geographically restricted to northern California but were not closely associated with Hudson's Bay Company sites nor were they found within the realm of Spanish/Mexican influence. Partly on this evidence, Meighan suggests that they originated with American traders and date to the period 1850–70. Billeck (2008) indicates that drawn red-on-yellow beads were present on the Great Plains by the 1840s. Both MRN-489 and MRN-202 also yielded the more common red-on-white “cornaline d'Aleppo” beads, which may date to as early as the late 1830s but are likewise more indicative of the mid-nineteenth century (Billeck 2008). Lastly, a single “candy striped” compound drawn bead (IVa14) was recovered from MRN-202. Meighan felt that this bead style (his Type 190) was introduced perhaps as late as 1870, but subsequent information from Venice seems to suggest a somewhat earlier production date (Panini 2017).

In sum, the glass beads from Toms Point reflect both long-term patterns in glass bead consumption as well as the incorporation of comparatively newer types. The bulk of the beads, including the white-on-white and red-on-green compound beads, are similar to those found at Spanish missions and contemporaneous sites throughout central California. These may suggest use of Toms Point as a mission-era refuge—a possibility hinted at by the documentary record (Schneider and Panich 2019)—or they may be beads that residents brought with them to Tomales Bay upon leaving the missions. Interestingly, the small bead assemblage from MRN-201 is entirely comprised of these potentially earlier bead types. Other beads, notably the red-on-yellow and red-on-white varieties, are largely absent from Spanish-era sites and therefore indicate the continued acquisition of glass beads well into the second half of the nineteenth century. The red exteriors, combined with the relatively large size of some of the beads, likely resembled Native-produced magnesite beads, which may explain their seeming popularity at the site.

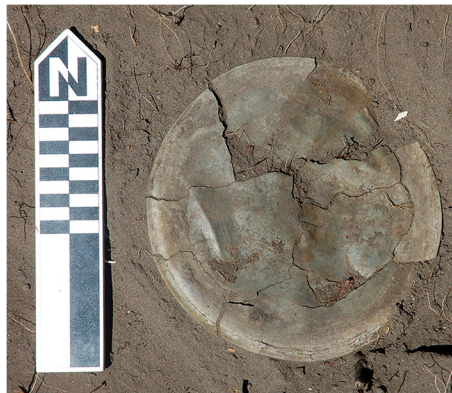
Personal Adornment Excavations at MRN-202 revealed additional items of personal adornment, including an array of buttons, closures, and grommets. Of note are five four-hole white “small china” Prosser buttons, which correspond neatly to the post-1840 date of the trading post (Sprague 2002). In addition to three other metal and bone buttons are five fragments of metal hook and eye closures, two grommets, and two clothing rivets. Taken together, these items indicate that at least some Native people living at the site dressed in Western-style clothes. Attention to personal appearance may also be reflected in two fragments of bone lice combs found at the site. Items of personal adornment from Toms Point parallel those recovered from Native Californian contexts at other roughly contemporaneous sites, including the area around the former Colony Ross (Lightfoot and Gonzalez 2018a:78–80) and a residential midden associated with Native Laborers at Rancho Petaluma (Silliman 2004:116–118).

Ceramics and Tablewares Ceramic artifacts are relatively sparse at MRN-202 and MRN-489, and entirely absent from MRN-201. Indeed, the ceramic assemblage from Toms Point is restricted in both number and diversity compared to similar assemblages from contemporaneous sites where Native Californians lived and labored in the mid-nineteenth century (Lightfoot and Gonzalez 2018a:60–64; Silliman 2004:139). Table 2 lists the ceramic tablewares recovered during excavations at MRN-202. Various British

Table 2 Ceramic artifacts from excavations at MRN-202. Does not include tobacco pipes.

General ceramic type	Style or decoration	Vessel type(s), if known	Count	Weight (g)
<i>North American Wares</i>				
Baked Clay			9	22.68
Brick			1	1.21
Lead-Glazed Earthenware		Bowl, plate (?)	5	116.98
Yellow ware	Brown glaze	Cup?	1	0.5
<i>British Wares</i>				
Creamware	Blue shell-edge	Plate	2	8.49
Stoneware		Bottle	1	3.10
White improved earthenware	White Granite, with ribbing	Cup?	2	21.65
White improved earthenware	Black transfer print		1	5.79
White improved earthenware	Purple transfer print	Plate	2	29.78
White improved earthenware	Undecorated	Bowls, plates, tureens	36	270.02
<i>Asian Wares</i>				
Brown-Glazed Stoneware	Horizontal and vertical ribbing	Storage jar	3	166.95
Chinese Export Porcelain	Canton motifs	Bowls, plates	16	32.24

whitewares make up the majority of the assemblage, most of them representing undecorated vessels for serving and eating. The few decorated British wares include black and purple transfer-printed vessels; a sherd of the latter, with matching decorative motif, is also present in the collection from MRN-489, tying the two collections together. The known manufacturing dates of black and purple transfer-printed wares correspond to the mid-nineteenth century occupation of Toms Point (Samford 1997:20). North American wares are primarily comprised of lead-glazed earthenwares, which were commonly used in Spanish and Mexican California (MNV=2). Several pieces of baked clay may represent locally produced vessels, but the fragments are too small to be certain. The general paucity of the ceramic tablewares at MRN-202 may in part be explained by the presence of metal copper-alloy plates; one complete plate,

**Fig. 4** Copper alloy plate *in situ* during excavations at Toms Point. Scale in cm

without an obvious maker's mark, and fragments of at least one other were recovered during our excavations (Fig. 4).

Asian ceramics from MRN-202 include several sherds of a brown-glazed stoneware vessel with a distinctive decorative motif involving horizontal and vertical lines (Fig. 5). The closest visual matches are brown-glazed storage jars recovered from a ship that sank near Desaru, Malaysia, in the 1840s. Geochemical analysis of a sample of those jars indicates that they were manufactured in Thailand (Grave and McNiven 2013). The stoneware vessel from Toms Point is unlike the common stoneware storage jars found at Overseas Chinese sites in American-period California, and the similarity to the Desaru jars may indicate a pre-Gold Rush date. Other Asian ceramics from MRN-202 included nineteenth-century Chinese export porcelain with the Canton rim motif (Mudge 1981:1962). Though these are relatively common at California sites dating to the first half of the nineteenth century, they too differ from tablewares found at later Overseas Chinese sites. Research at contemporary sites, such as the wreck of the *Frolic* which ran aground in 1850 in Mendocino County, California, indicate that the Asian ceramics from Toms Point reflect the trading post's role in the broad-scale economic networks that connected the Pacific world in the first half of the nineteenth century (Layton 2002).

A final class of ceramic artifacts are fragments of tobacco pipes. Of the 21 total pipe fragments, 19 were white ball clay or kaolin. This included 14 bowl fragments, three stem fragments, and two fragments representing the joint between the bowl and the stem. Three had impressed decorations including shell and floral motifs. Only one had writing, but the maker could not be determined. Although the white clay tobacco pipe fragments from MRN-202 largely lack diagnostic features, they resemble those from other mid-nineteenth-century sites in the region (Dietz 1976:119–121; Hardesty 1997:105–107; Silliman 2004:138–139). The two remaining fragments represent stem fragments from a brown glazed earthenware pipe, as well as one that was apparently made from local earthenware. The MRN-489 collection included a final tobacco related artifact in the form of a stem fragment of a red clay pipe. Taken together, these materials attest to the popularity of tobacco among colonists and Native people alike, following long-term patterns in central California (Cuthrell et al. 2016).



Fig. 5 Asian stoneware vessel fragments from MRN-202

Glass In addition to glass beads, other glass artifacts from MRN-201 and MRN-202 include fragments of flat and container glass, some of which is time-sensitive, as well as several examples of intentionally modified glass and flaked glass debitage (Fig. 6). All fourteen fragments of glass collected from the surface of MRN-201 come from bottles or other containers, whereas a much larger assemblage of glass ($n = 598$) from MRN-202, collected primarily from the upper 30 cm, includes pieces of bottles/containers and flat glass, suggesting the presence of one or more structures with window panes. Nineteenth-century Indigenous residents of Toms Point appear to have continued making and using chert and obsidian tools for processing hides and other daily tasks associated with the trading post, but they also creatively blended a living technological tradition (flintknapping) with imported materials (mass-produced glass). Glass tools (e.g., projectile point preforms and flake tools), debitage, and modified glass—sherds of glass with evidence of light retouch—are present in the two Toms Point artifact assemblages and connect to a broader pattern of glass tool production among Indigenous laborers as creative and knowledgeable participants in exploitative maritime industries (e.g., Ainis et al. 2017; Lightfoot and Gonzalez 2018a; Martindale and Jurakic 2006; Russell 2012).

As time diagnostics, glass color, bottle manufacturing method, and maker's marks support a mid to late-nineteenth century occupation at Toms Point. Colors of bottle/container glass from both sites include amber ($n = 7$), colorless ($n = 7$), green ($n = 16$), light green/aqua ($n = 3$), and a larger amount of dark green, or "black," glass ($n = 232$) manufactured primarily before the 1890s (Lindsey 2020). One colorless glass bottle finish collected from MRN-202 exhibits a two-piece mold and crudely applied oil or ring finish circa, 1830s-1920s (Lindsey 2020). Two additional fragments of amber glass embossed with letters "AM" and "WOLFE'S" are from a bottle of Udolpho

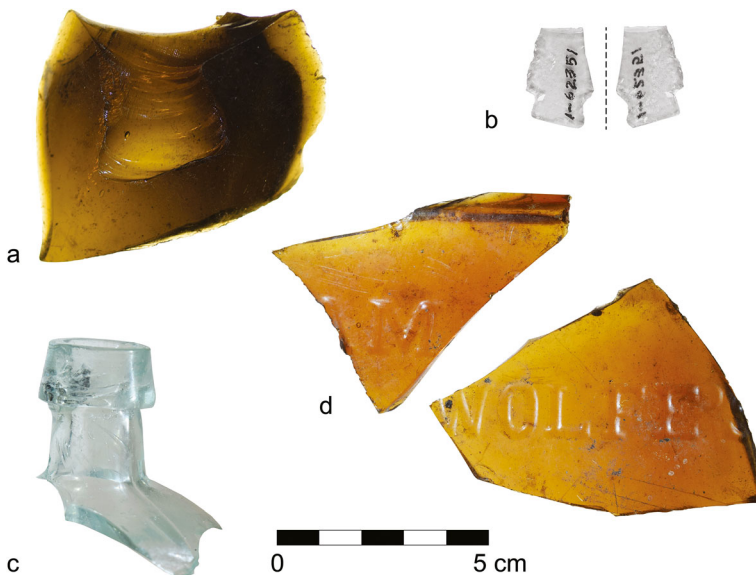


Fig. 6 Glass artifacts from the Tomales Bay region include **a** several pieces of modified bottle glass from CA-MRN-202, **b** a colorless glass projectile point fragment from CA-MRN-260, and **c**, **d** diagnostic glass fragments from CA-MRN-202

Wolfe's Aromatic Schnapps produced from 1848 to the early-1900s (Fike 2006:187). The presence of a tonic and diuretic at Toms Point raises questions about the blending of Indigenous and Western medicinal practices at this coastal hub, perhaps not unlike the blending of Chinese and Western medicine identified in archaeological collections from Chinese immigrant communities in California (Voss 2005).

Maritime Artifacts In addition to the objects that Native people acquired through the maritime trade, the residents of Toms Point obtained some material directly from a marooned merchant ship. The vessel in question was the *Oxford*, which was reportedly carrying “dry goods and liquors” bound for San Francisco when it became lost in the coastal fog and mired in the shallow waters of Tomales Bay in 1852 (*Daily Alta California* 1852). Although the ship's owners were able to orchestrate the salvage of the cargo, the vessel itself appears to have been abandoned and portions salvaged by residents of the Toms Point trading post (Byram 2013:37–38; Panich et al. 2018c:161–162).

Given the long history of Native Californians creatively recycling materials from Euroamerican shipwrecks, we suspect that the site's Native inhabitants were directly involved in the salvage of the *Oxford* (e.g., Russell 2011; Layton 2002). One clue into the Indigenous recycling of materials from the shipwreck is the use of lead sheeting for what appear to be ornaments. Three such artifacts were recovered from MRN-489 and consist of rolled pieces of lead measuring approximately 4–5 cm in length and 1–2 cm in diameter. Though sheet lead was available commercially, the wreck of the *Oxford* was a potential source of this material given the various ways that sheet lead was used in maritime contexts, including as sheaths for hawsepipes, to construct scuppers, or to line the front of the bow, among other uses (James Delgado, pers. comm.).

The collections from MRN-202 and MRN-489 contain other artifacts that may relate to the *Oxford*. Many of these are consistent with historical accounts referring to one of the main structures at the trading post as a “nautical medley” that was said to be “a cross betwixt a cottage and a ship” (Munro-Fraser 1880:124). Some of the material was taken from the ship's deck, possibly including the cabin, as suggested by various metal fixtures in the MRN-489 assemblage. The collections from MRN-489 and MRN-202 also contain a large quantity of ship's fastenings of both iron and copper alloy (Fig. 7). The vast majority are square-shafted nails, or spikes, although some bolts were also recovered. The ferrous spikes were likely used above the water line, or in the ship's interior, whereas the copper alloy fastenings—commonly called composition spikes—would have been used below the water line to avoid galvanic action caused by the use of iron fastenings to secure copper sheathing (McCarthy 2005). The ships' fastenings from Toms Point are identical to those from contemporary sites in California and Oregon (e.g., Hattori and Brigham 1990; Tveskov et al. 2015).

Taken together, the evidence points toward large-scale salvaging of material, particularly timbers, from the wreck of the *Oxford*. Based on historical accounts, it seems likely that the bulk of the wood taken from the wreck was used to create structures at the trading post. Yet we did not detect any particular clustering of maritime artifacts that would indicate remnants of particular dwellings. Instead, site residents may have separated the spikes from the timbers and reused the metal for various purposes, as suggested by their wide spatial distribution in both collections. We documented a range of other metal artifacts at MRN-202 and MRN-201, but they could not be linked



Fig. 7 Ship's fastenings from MRN-202. Scale in cm.

directly to the *Oxford*. Although we did not conduct excavations at MRN-201, the lack of distinctly maritime artifacts there may point toward some social or chronological separation between the occupants of the two sites.

Introduced Plants and Animals Very few objects in the MRN-201 and MRN-202 artifact assemblages directly address new or transforming relationships to the natural world, including introduced plants and animals. Besides the collection of one mule shoe from MRN-202, horse tack and other equipment often associated with cowboy gear (see Panich 2017) were not collected from Toms Point, contrary to the popular narrative of “Tom Vaquero” and a bustling trading post (Lauff 2016 [1916]). Domesticated plants and animals are present in the archaeobotanical and zooarchaeological assemblages but, even then, in small quantities. A single grain of wheat (*Triticum* sp.) and a seed head from an unknown Afro-Eurasian domesticated grain might reflect part of a meal or feed for livestock (Schneider et al. 2018:62–63). Significant quantities of non-native plant taxa such as mallow and exotic ruderal herbs may speak to a changing landscape at Toms Point, indirectly illustrating the extent to which Native Coast Miwok peoples living at Toms Point were living among—and persisting within—a transformed natural world. Moreover, given the presumed focus of the trading post on the collection, processing, and sale of cow hides, cow bones are surprisingly rare (NISP=20, MNI=2). Yet, when combined with counts of sheep/goat (NISP=1, MNI=1), horse/donkey (NISP=1, MNI=1), pig (NISP=65, MNI=4), and chicken (NISP=6, MNI=1), we see that Toms Point residents may have still incorporated non-native fauna into meals that probably also included wild plants and animal taxa (Schneider et al. 2018). Tending and processing of animals may have taken place offsite, but the picture of Toms Point that emerges is one of a colonial place largely supported by resilient Indigenous cultural and ecological knowledge.

Summary and Regional Context

The archaeology of the mid-nineteenth century trading post at Toms Point centered on two related archaeological sites, MRN-202 and MRN-489. The evidence is consistent

with the historical record of a trading post staffed primarily by Coast Miwok people and directed at the type of coastal trade that characterized the region before and shortly after the Gold Rush. Based on the material evidence, we infer that the Native residents of the site participated in the full suite of economic opportunities offered by emerging capitalist markets and enduring Indigenous networks. Yet the materials do not point toward the accumulation of wealth by either George Wood or what contemporary observers called “his Indians.” Instead, Native people likely predicated their participation in the trading post on their ability to remain in their ancestral homeland. This focus on connections to meaningful places and people may also be seen in the small assemblage from MRN-201, which contains an even more restricted set of materials. Given the seemingly earlier date of the associated artifacts, this site may date to the late 1810s and early 1820s, when several elderly and ailing Coast Miwok individuals were baptized in the village of *Seglogue* instead of moving to the nearest Spanish mission at San Rafael (Schneider and Panich 2019).

Taken together, the Toms Point materials add to a growing body of evidence related to the Native Californian refugium at Tomales Bay (see Fig. 1). Historical maps, documentary evidence, and previous archaeological research reveal a number of additional settlements in the region (Panich and Schneider 2019; Panich et al. 2018c; Schneider and Panich 2019), some of which have associated archaeological collections. Site MRN-260, for example, is on a landform called Sand Point, roughly 2 km north of Toms Point. Early archaeological observations describe the remains of the “wooden walls of [an] Indian house blowing out of sand” and the presence of a mule shoe, a green glass projectile point, iron spikes, and a musket ball, along with a variety of obsidian and chert artifacts (Coleman 2012). We inspected a separate collection from MRN-260 at the Phoebe Apperson Hearst Museum of Anthropology (PAHMA) at the University of California, Berkeley, that included a colorless glass projectile point (see Fig. 6). The collection also contained 50 white-on-white glass beads (IVa11 and IVa13) among other minor varieties as well as eight clamshell disk beads, which are lacking at Toms Point. Based on existing documentation, MRN-260 appears to be roughly contemporaneous with MRN-202, although the physical separation and differences in their artifact assemblages may indicate that the residents of MRN-260 practiced some sort of social distance.

Other sites along Tomales Bay seem to reflect places where Coast Miwok people and their Native neighbors remained further removed from settler society, as evidenced by their minimal archaeological profile despite having been noted in mid-nineteenth-century documents. One example of this category of settlement is MRN-250, which appears as a notable Native rancheria on maps dating to the 1850s and 1860s. Nevertheless, recent archaeological testing yielded few artifacts—save for two glass beads—that could definitively speak to the site’s postcontact occupation (Byram 2013; Engel et al. 2018). On the eastern coast of the Bay, *Echa-colom* was a large rancheria near present-day Marshall where Coast Miwok people made a living through fishing and other means into the mid-1900s. In contrast to many of the contemporaneous Tomales Bay sites, *Echa-colom* is well represented in the documentary and ethnographic record but it has not been fully recorded archaeologically. Still, these sites indicate that at least some Coast Miwok people chose to maintain social and economic distance from Euroamerican newcomers in the early years of settler colonialism.

One mid-nineteenth-century rancheria that has been the subject of extensive archaeological investigation is *Echa-tamal*, near the town of Nicasio, roughly 12 km inland from the southern tip of Tomales Bay. The artifacts from this site, which date from precontact times into the 1880s, are well described elsewhere (Dietz 1976) but generally mirror those from Toms Point. The assemblage, for example, includes percussion caps, hook and eye fasteners, and large quantities of white four-hole Prosser buttons. The glass beads from MRN-402 also match the profile from Toms Point in many ways: the most prominent bead type by far were compound white beads ($n = 513$), followed by simple white beads ($n = 152$), red-on-green beads ($n = 95$), and red-on-white Cornaline D'Aleppo beads ($n = 54$). The site also contained four "candy-striped" compound beads, like the one found at Toms Point, among other types. Nevertheless, the lack of red-on-yellow beads in what is otherwise one of the largest glass bead assemblages in the region may speak to subtle differences in the connections Coast Miwok people had to various sources of materials. The existence of multiple networks is also reflected in the obsidian assemblage, which suggests a stronger reliance on the Annadel source (Dietz 1976:86–112).

A final class of sites represent places, like the Toms Point trading post, where Euroamericans relied on Native Californians for labor. One location was a sawmill and ranching operation run by American settler Stephen Smith who, like George Thomas Wood, married a Coast Miwok woman (Schneider and Panich 2019:39). This locale is recorded as two sites 15 km north of Toms Point. CA-SON-291 is the remnant of Smith's adobe ranch house while CA-SON-290 appears to be the Bodega Miwok settlement of *Su'wutene* and has materials related to the ranch's Native Californian laborers and precontact occupants. Excavations at SON-291 in the 1990s revealed obsidian, chert, and even a charmstone among the adobe foundations—items that may have been left by Native workers during the building's construction (Selverston 2000). Archaeological testing at SON-290 in the 1970s recovered a large number of imported ceramic, glass, and metal artifacts dating to the mid-nineteenth century. At least one glass projectile point was noted (Werner 1980). We examined an earlier collection from SON-290, housed at PAHMA, that similarly contained many ceramic and glass artifacts, with several of the latter exhibiting intentional flaking. These too, appear to date to the mid-nineteenth century. One glass bottle, for example, was marked "Dixon & Co. Liverpool" – a bottle with the same marking was reported from an early 1850s context in San Francisco (Delgado 2009:149). The collection also included a red-on-yellow glass bead similar to those noted at MRN-489, perhaps indicating that the Native residents there shared sources of material goods with those who lived at Toms Point.

Overall, the addition of data from other regional sites reinforces the picture of the initial American settlements along the central California coast as both interconnected with global capitalism, but ultimately reliant on local Indigenous labor and knowledge. While we did not conduct interviews as part of our study of Toms Point, we know of living Coast Miwok people who can trace their descent to families living at Tomales Bay during the mid to late-1800s. We recognize the value that Indigenous oral traditions can play in further illuminating the social lives of peoples inhabiting their homeland during and long after assorted mercantile enterprises came and went. Indeed, Tomales Bay remains an important part of the Indigenous landscape today, 150 years after the closing of the Toms Point trading post.

Conclusion

Archaeologists are increasingly interested in examining the lives of Indigenous people in the context of capitalist economies and expansionist settler states. Studies across North America demonstrate that historical archaeology has the potential to illuminate Indigenous persistence in temporal contexts well past initial encounters and early colonial institutions (Gould et al. 2019; Law Pezzarossi and Sheptak 2019). In California, much of the historical archaeology of Native people has to date focused on earlier sites related to the Franciscan mission system and Russian fur trade activities, subtly reinforcing the idea that archaeology could not contribute to the understanding of more recent entanglements between Native Californians and Euroamerican newcomers (Lightfoot 2006; Panich 2019; Schneider 2019). Yet, as recent research shows, archaeology can illuminate how Native Californians, like Native people elsewhere, subverted capitalist markets by incorporating wage labor into existing seasonal rounds and technological practices (Sunseri 2017; Tveskov 2007). Studies of these more recent pasts help move archaeology beyond overly simplistic narratives of hybridity or Indigenous cultural change and instead highlight the meaningful and creative choices that Native peoples made to reaffirm ties to their ancestral homelands.

We see a similar pattern at Toms Point. There, Native people had access to a range of local and foreign materials. Trading post residents used mass-produced items such as ceramics, firearms, and clothing that reached them via the expansive tendrils of global capitalism while other items like obsidian and beads traveled along more regionally based Indigenous networks. Yet the materials are not ostentatious. The glass and ceramic artifacts are utilitarian in nature and represent a restricted range of material and vessel types. It appears that residents salvaged materials from a local shipwreck, indicating ingenuity but also the practical requirements of living in what remained a relatively remote location even as nearby ports like San Francisco grew rapidly in the same period. Viewed together, the materials from MRN-202 and MRN-489 suggest that Native labor and regional connections allowed George Wood to establish himself economically in the tumultuous years of the mid-nineteenth century. For their part, the site's Native occupants may have seen their involvement in the Pacific trade in primarily pragmatic, as opposed to entrepreneurial, terms: they worked for George Wood not necessarily to enrich themselves but rather to maintain residence in their ancestral homelands.

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