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*THE JESSE KIRK BUTTON BELT*

*by*

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### INTRODUCTION

Ethnographic artifacts, when exhaustively researched, may sometimes be of assistance in understanding the way of life of a people and the cultural influences that contribute to that way of life. This may be especially true of an artifact that combines both Indian and White culture elements. From such an object of acculturation we may be able to understand better some of the relationships between Indian and White people of a particular place and time. The present paper discusses such an artifact and began simply as an attempt to identify the object. In the course of the attempt as identification, a number of events and incidents were reviewed that, together, seemed appropriate to note in regard to Indian-White relationships. The specific object, itself, may or may not be of much importance but the circumstances surrounding its origin and history are.

The artifact under consideration is a rather unusual specimen acquired in 1970 by Robert L. Ogle of Lakeview, Oregon, a private collector of Indian ethnographic artifacts. Whenever possible Mr. Ogle has made every effort to document the objects in his collection and most of them have excellent documentation. The object in question is referred to as a "button belt" and consists of a 50 inch strip of fabric with some 120 buttons attached to it in three long rows. The documentation appeared to have some internal inconsistencies and conflicts. It is reported to have been made by the Klamath Indians and, alternatively, by the Modoc Indians in the mid-nineteenth century from buttons cut from the clothing of "soldiers" in John C. Fremont's mid-nineteenth century exploring party.

The belt was owned by a Mr. Jesse Kirk until his death in 1965. Mr. Kirk had told his son that the belt was to be given to Mr. Ogle when he, Jesse Kirk, passed on. In 1970, the son presented the belt to Mr. Ogle (Ogle 1970). The conflict in the stories of the origin of the belt caused Mr. Ogle to question its origin and, in 1972, he sent it to Robert L. Stephenson for the purpose of analysis and identification of the buttons and the fabric and to see if any documentary sources could support the stories of its origin. J. David Miller, Research Assistant on the staff of the Institute, analyzed the buttons and the fabric to see if they correspond to the appropriate time period and probable usage. Robert L. Stephenson examined the stories of its origin and searched the literature of the exploring parties of the period to see if the events could be verified.

### THE KIRK STORY OF THE BUTTON BELT

Mr. Jesse Kirk was a Modoc Indian living on the Klamath Indian Reservation in south-central Oregon. He is said to have been related to Schonchin and to Winema, both well known for their roles in the Modoc War of 1872. When he died in 1965 he was in his seventies. He had

discussed this belt, over a period of many years, with Mr. Ogle and had told the following story of its origin (Ogle 1970).

When John C. Fremont first passed through the Modoc country the Modocs ambushed the party somewhere near the north end of Tule Lake and killed 14 or 15 of Fremont's men. After the dust had cleared they picked over the dead and Jesse Kirk's great uncle (name unknown) cut all the buttons off the uniforms. He thought they were specks from the sun because they were so shiney. He, later, acquired a strip of selvage edge cloth from some Warm Springs Indians and made a belt of these buttons. This is the belt that Jesse Kirk's son gave to Robert Ogle.

#### THE CASEY STORY OF THE BUTTON BELT

A slightly different story of this button belt was published in the May 26, 1965 issue of the Herald and News newspaper of Klamath Falls, Oregon with the by-line of Veston Casey, a resident of Beatty, Oregon on the Klamath Indian Reservation. The story was preceded by a brief editorial note and accompanied by a picture of the button belt. The belt in the picture is unquestionably the one here discussed and the caption states that it was owned by Jesse Kirk. This story and picture appear to have been prepared after the death of Jesse Kirk because in the caption for the picture it is stated that the belt "... is held by Mrs. S. F. Scott, secretary in the Office of Puchett and Sherer..." (Casey 1965). Robert Ogle states that when Jesse Kirk died "... the item went into lawyer Puchett's vault in Klamath Falls" (Ogle 1970).

The story relates that, at some unspecified date, a fifteen year old Klamath Indian boy name Chiloquis witnessed a brutal massacre of the people of his village by a group of soldiers under the command of John C. Fremont. Chiloquis was returning home from hunting and all of the able-bodied men of the village were out on "patrols". Only the women and old men were in the village. From a high ridge, Chiloquis saw Fremont and his soldiers ride into the camp and open fire on the defenseless women and old men. He saw them rope some of the Indians and drag them to death behind their horses. Then Fremont and his soldiers "left their dead on the field and rode off".

After the massacre, the Klamaths cut the buttons from the dead soldiers' uniforms and made a belt of them. The buttons indicated that between 21 and 24 men fell that day. When Chiloquis came down into the village he learned that his mother had been one of those dragged to death behind a horse. The editor's note states that this story, as reported by Veston Casey, had been handed down by the Klamaths and Modocs who learned it from the boy Chiloquis. The boy later became a chief of his people, signed a treaty with the Whites, and eventually gave his name to the town of Chiloquin, Oregon (Casey 1965).

The newspaper account then relates a story of subsequent retribution by the Klamaths on a wagon train. This may or may not relate to the story of the button belt.

## ANALYSIS OF THE BUTTON BELT STORIES

Let us now examine these stories, see who the principals were, and compare the stories with the documentary records. Since the stories identify the marauders as "soldiers" of John C. Fremont's party we must assume a date of either December, 1843 or May, 1846, the only times that Fremont was in the Klamath or the Modoc country (Nevins 1939).

The Klamath Indians, in the mid-nineteenth century, were a strong and respected tribe of non-agricultural Indians living in a number of transitory villages around and in the vicinity of the Klamath Lakes in what is now Klamath County, Oregon. They were lake and river oriented people and well adapted to the forest environment. Their economy and society have been ably described (Spier 1930; Stern 1965). Their hunting range extended into the Cascade Mountains to the west, to Goose Lake in the desert area to the east, to Tule Lake on the south, and to Crater Lake on the north (Fig. 1).

The Modoc Indians were closely related to the Klamaths and occupied the area around Tule Lake to the south and southeast of the Klamath Lakes (Fig. 1). Their culture was very similar to that of the Klamaths but less oriented to the lake, river, and forest environment (Ray 1963). They were more adapted to the semi-arid, sagebrush country and to the rougher "Lava beds" type of terrain. Even their lakeside orientation was different from that of the Klamaths. The Klamath Lakes were heavily forested or marshy around the edges while Tule Lake is a "desert lake" with little vegetation around its shores (Thompson 1967).

The Modocs' relationship with the Klamaths was rather close in the mid-nineteenth century, but they held mutually exclusive territories. It was the forced violation of this territorial relationship that led to the Modoc War of 1872 (Thompson 1967, Riddle 1914) and the Klamath-Modoc friendship completely deteriorated at that time. The American military forces had, in 1870-71, required the Modocs to move onto the Klamath Reservation, a situation that neither the Klamaths nor the Modocs found to be tolerable. The Modocs defied the military authority and returned to their home near Tule Lake. The Modoc War was the attempt of the American military forces to return the Modocs to the Klamath Reservation. In later years, after the Modoc War was over, the two groups gradually resumed friendly relations as they had had during the period under discussion here.

By the 1840's the Klamath-Modoc country was moderately well known to White men and at least some of the Klamath Indians had had direct contact with the Whites. There are partially verified stories of trappers in the vicinity of the Klamath Lakes in the early 1820's and before. Elliott states that to Mr. Finnan McDonald, as early as 1807, evidently belongs the credit of having first reached the Klamath country (Elliott 1910: 201-202). In November of 1826 Peter Skene Ogden with a party of Hudson's Bay Company trappers reached the upper end of Klamath Lake. Two of his men, McKay and McDonald, had been there before (McArthur 1926: 310). In 1827-28 Jedediah Smith and party approached the southern edge of the Klamath and Modoc countries before turning west to the coast (Maloney 1936: 9-23, 1940: 305). In 1832-33 Ewing Young pushed as far north as Klamath Lake and Tule Lake and in 1833 reported seeing the villages

in that area devastated by a pestilence, presumably smallpox (Young 1920: 191). By 1832, the Hudson's Bay Company was sending, yearly, few brigades from the Columbia to California (Maloney 1936: 11). These were usually large parties of trappers and mountain men, often accompanied by women and children. By 1834-37, Ewing Young and Hall J. Kelley were trailing horses and cattle over the Siskiyou Mountains to the Willamette Valley, passing along the west side of the Klamath and Modoc country (Young 1920: 193; Powell 1917: map facing page 120). In 1846, the Applegate Trail was laid out to pass wagon trains by the Modoc and Klamath winter settlements on Tule and Lower Klamath Lakes (Stern 1965: 28).

Stern reviews the frontier condition of the three or four decades before 1850 emphasizing the hostile Klamath and Modoc contacts with other Indians of central and western Oregon (Stern 1965: 22-42). He also mentions (pages 22-23) a visit of "a large party of the Clamath tribe" to Oregon City in 1843. It is of interest to note that Stern consistently refers to the Klamath and Modoc people as being together on any question involving other Indian groups or White people, during this mid-century period. The two tribes were on close friendly terms.

The point of all this is that the Klamath and the Modoc Indians had abundant opportunity between the 1820's and the 1860's to have experienced the events related by Chiloquis as well as the events related by Jesse Kirk. Furthermore, as we may see later, there may be no real conflict between the two stories. The event may have involved members of both tribes who happened to be together at that particular time.

But let us turn now to John C. Fremont and his appearance in the Klamath-Modoc country.

John C. Fremont, reared and schooled in Charleston, South Carolina, was a topographical engineer officer in the U.S. Army who headed a series of exploring parties into the American West in the 1840's (Bigelow 1856; Upham 1856). He subsequently became involved in the acquisition of California by the United States in the Mexican War leading to heated controversy, politics, and eventually to his running for President of the United States as the first candidate of the Republic Party (Nevins 1939). He was a controversial figure of his time and a nationally prominent one. His name still evokes controversy in Oregon and northern California and is still very well known there. Historical events of the mid-nineteenth century often have been, and still are, connected incorrectly with Fremont simply because his was the name that was best known as an explorer of that period.

Two of the Fremont expeditions brought him into direct contact with the Klamath Indians and one expedition passed through the Modoc country. The expedition of 1843-44 brought Fremont from the Columbia River, at the Dalles, across the upper portion of Klamath Lake (actually Klamath Marsh rather than the lake itself), and eastward from there to Winter Ridge and Summer Lake in western Lake County, Oregon (Fig. 1). He was in the Klamath country from December 9-16, 1843 and his journal provides a clear picture of the cautious but friendly relations with the Klamaths at that time (Fremont 1945: 202-206). The entries of December 10th (a misprint in the published journal lists this as December

11th) to 13th also give some description of the Klamath Indians of the time and are repeated here to illustrate the Indian-White relations and attitudes.

December 11.--The country began to improve; and about 11 o'clock we reached a spring of cold water on the edge of a savannah, or grassy meadow, which our guides informed us was an arm of the Tlamath Lake; and a few miles further we entered upon an extensive meadow, or lake of grass, surrounded by timbered mountains. This was the Tlamath Lake. It was a picturesque and beautiful spot, and rendered more attractive to us by the abundant and excellent grass, which our animals, after travelling through pine forests, so much needed; but the broad sheet of water which constitutes a lake was not to be seen. Overlooking it, immediately west, were several snowy knobs, belonging to what we have considered a branch of the Cascade range. A low point covered with pines made out into the lake, which afforded us a good place for an encampment, and for the security of our horses, which were guarded in view on the open meadow. The character of courage and hostility attributed to the Indians of this quarter induced more than usual precaution; and, seeing smokes rising from the middle of the lake (or savannah) and along the opposite shores, I directed the howitzer to be fired. It was the first time our guides had seen it discharged; and the bursting of the shell at a distance, which was something like the second fire of the gun, amazed and bewildered them with delight. It inspired them with triumphant feelings; but on the camps at a distance the effect was different, for the smokes in the lake and on the shores immediately disappeared.

The point on which we were encamped forms, with the opposite eastern shore, a narrow neck, connecting the body of the lake with a deep cove or bay which receives the principal affluent stream, and over the greater part of which the water (or rather ice) was at this time dispersed in shallow pools. Among the grass, and scattered over the prairie lake, appeared to be similar marshes. It is simply a shallow basin, which, for a short period at the time of melting snows, is covered with water from the neighboring mountains; but this probably soon runs off, and leaves for the remainder of the year a green savannah, through the midst of which the river Tlamath, which flows to the ocean, winds its way to the outlet on the southwestern side.

December 11.--No Indians made their appearance, and I determined to pay them a visit. Accordingly, the people were gathered together, and we rode out towards the village in the middle of the lake, which one of our guides had previously visited. It could not be directly approached, as a large part of the lake appeared a marsh; and there were sheets of ice among the grass, on which our horses could not keep their footing. We therefore followed the guide for a



considerable distance along the forest; and then turned off towards the village, which we soon began to see was a few large huts, on the top of which were collected the Indians. When we had arrived within half a mile of the village, two persons were seen advancing to meet us; and, to please the fancy of our guides, we ranged ourselves into a long line, riding abreast, while they galloped ahead to meet the strangers.

We were surprised, on riding up, to find one of them a woman, having never before known a squaw to take any part in the business of war. They were the village chief and his wife, who, in excitement and alarm at the unusual event and appearance, had come out to meet their fate together. The chief was a very prepossessing Indian, with very handsome features and a singularly soft and agreeable voice--so remarkable as to attract general notice.

The huts were grouped together on the bank of the river, which, from being spread out in a shallow marsh at the upper end of the lake, was collected here into a single stream. They were large round huts, perhaps 20 feet in diameter, with rounded tops, on which was the door by which they descended into the interior. Within, they were supported by posts and beams.

Almost like plants, these people seem to have adapted themselves to the soil, and to be growing on what the immediate locality afforded. Their only subsistence at this time appeared to be a small fish, great quantities of which, that had been smoked and dried, were suspended on strings about the lodge. Heaps of straw were lying around; and their residence in the midst of grass and rushes had taught them a peculiar skill in converting this material to useful purposes. Their shoes were made of straw or grass, which seemed well adapted for a snowy country; and the women wore on their head a closely-woven basket, which made a very good cap. Among other things, were parti-colored mats about four feet square, which we purchased to lay on the snow under our blankets, and to use for table-cloths.

Numbers of singular-looking dogs, resembling wolves, were sitting on the tops of the huts; and of these we purchased a young one, which, after its birthplace, was name Tlamath. The language spoken by these Indians is different from that of the Shoshonee and Columbia river tribes; and otherwise than by signs they cannot understand each other. They made us comprehend that they were at war with the people who lived to the southward and to the eastward; but I could obtain from them no certain information. The river on which they live enters the Cascade mountains on the western side of the lake, and breaks through them by a passage impracticable for travellers; but over the mountains, to the northward,

are passes which present no other obstacle than in the almost impenetrable forests. Unlike any Indians we had previously seen, these wore shells in their noses. We returned to our camp after remaining here an hour or two, accompanied by a number of Indians.

In order to recruit a little the strength of our animals and obtain some acquaintance with the locality, we remained here for the remainder of the day. By observation, the latitude of the camp was  $42^{\circ} 56' 51''$ ; and the diameter of the lake, or meadow, as has been intimated, about 20 miles. It is a picturesque and beautiful spot; and, under the hand of cultivation, might become a little paradise. Game is found in the forest; timbered and snowy mountains skirt it, and fertility characterizes it. Situated near the heads of three rivers, and on the line of inland communication with California, and near to Indians noted for treachery, it will naturally, in the progress of the settlement of Oregon, become a point of military occupation and settlement.

From Tlamath lake, the further continuation of our voyage assumed a character of discovery and exploration, which, from the Indians here, we could obtain no information to direct, and where the imaginary maps of the country, instead of assisting, exposed us to suffering and defeat. In our journey across the desert, Mary's lake, and the famous Buenaventura river, were two points on which I relied to recruit the animals, and repose the party. Forming agreeably to the best maps in my possession, a connected water-line from the Rocky mountains to the Pacific ocean, I felt no other anxiety than to pass safely across the intervening desert to the banks of the Buenaventura, where, in the softer climate of a more southern latitude, our horses might find grass to sustain them, and ourselves be sheltered from the rigors of winter and from the inhospitable desert. The guides who had conducted us thus far on our journey, were about to return; and I endeavored in vain to obtain others to lead us, even for a few days, in the direction (east) which we wished to go. The chief to whom I applied, alleged the want of horses, and the snow on the mountains across which our course would carry us, and the sickness of his family, as reasons for refusing to go with us.

December 12.--This morning the camp was thronged with Tlamath Indians from the southeastern shore of the lake; but, knowing the treacherous disposition, which is a remarkable characteristic of the Indians south of the Columbia, the camp was kept constantly on its guard. I was not unmindful of the disasters which Smith and other travellers had met with in this country, and therefore was equally vigilant in guarding against treachery and violence.

According to the best information I had been able to obtain from the Indians, in a few days' travelling we should

reach another large water, probably a lake, which they indicated exactly in the course we were about to pursue. We struck our tents at 10 o'clock, and crossed the lake in a nearly east direction, where it has the least extension--the breadth of the arm being here only about a mile and a half. There were ponds of ice, with but little grass for the greater part of the way; and it was difficult to get the pack-animals across, which fell frequently, and could not get up with their loads, unassisted. The morning was very unpleasant, snow falling at intervals in large flakes, and the sky dark. In about two hours we succeeded in getting the animals over; and, after travelling another hour along the eastern shore of the lake, we turned up into a cove where there was a sheltered place among the timber, with good grass, and encamped. The Indians, who had accompanied us so far, returned to their village on the southeastern shore. Among the pines here, I noticed some five or six feet in diameter.

December 13.--The night has been cold; the peaks around the lake gleam out brightly in the morning sun, and the thermometer is at zero. We continued up the hollow formed by a small affluent to the lake, and immediately entered an open pine forest on the mountain. The way here was sometimes obstructed by fallen trees, and the snow was four to twelve inches deep. The mules at the gun pulled heavily, and walking was a little laborious. In the midst of the wood, we heard the sound of galloping horses, and were agreeably surprised by the unexpected arrival of our Tlamath chief, with several Indians. He seemed to have found his conduct inhospitable in letting the strangers depart without a guide through the snow, and had come, with a few others, to pilot us a day or two on the way. After travelling in an easterly direction through the forest for about four hours, we reached a considerable stream, with a border of good grass; and here, by the advice of our guides, we encamped. It is about thirty feet wide, and two to four feet deep; the water clear, with some current; and, according to the information of our Indians, is the principal affluent to the lake, and the head-water of the Tlamath river.

A very clear sky enabled me to obtain here to-night good observations, including an emersion of the first satellite of Jupiter, which give for the longitude  $121^{\circ} 20' 42''$ , and for the latitude  $42^{\circ} 51' 26''$ . This emersion coincides remarkably well with the result obtained from an occultation at the encampment of December 7th to 8th, 1843; from which place, the line of our survey gives an easting of thirteen miles. The day's journey was 12 miles (Fremont 1845: 203-206).

There is no indication in Fremont's journal nor in any other record of that expedition of 1843-44, that we have had access to, that would suggest conflict with the Klamath Indians or that he had any contact with

the Modocs. It can be assumed with certainty that the incident of the creation of the button belt did not occur on this expedition nor in any relation to it.

The next Fremont expedition to the Klamath country was 29 months later, in May, 1846. California was still a Mexican possession but the Mexican War was about to begin and John C. Fremont was to play a major role in bringing California into the United States. The previous June he had recruited a party of some 60 men in St. Louis to survey a road to the Pacific Ocean and to explore a possible route through northern California to the Willamette Valley in Oregon. In central California he ran into conflict with the Mexican authorities and was ordered to leave. He then turned northward up the valley of the Sacramento River (Fig. 1) to explore a route to the Willamette settlements (Nevins 1939: 206-233).

In the first week in May, 1846 he was at the north end of the Klamath Lake (Fig. 1) with a considerable body of well armed and able "mountain men". The make-up of this party, whether they numbered 60 as stated by Nevins (1939: 207) or 40 as stated by Vestal (1928: 219), is of interest to the matter of the button belt. They were of French, Irish, Dutch, Scotch, and English extraction. There were twelve Delaware Indians and at least one half-blood Iroquois who were "good hunters and brave men". These were mountain men under command of a U.S. Army Captain. They probably differed little in dress, appearance and ability from the party that Lt. Fremont had taken through the Klamath country 29 months before. They were not "soldiers" in the military sense but would have been looked upon then, as in recollection later, by the Indians certainly as "soldiers". Such men were known for their heterogenous garb. It often reflected the background, nationality and experiences of each individual man. It was certainly no "uniform" but parts of uniforms often supplemented the buckskins, homespun and other parts of the dress. It was usually partly or wholly made by the man himself; always practical, yet often ornamented in one way or another. Buttons, of any origin, available at the time would be likely to have been present either as fasteners or as ornaments or both. Some parts of the clothing could have lasted all the way from St. Louis, other parts may have been acquired or made en route. Some may well have been Mexican clothes acquired in central California.

We have no published journal of this trip, such as we have for the earlier expeditions, but there are several published accounts of the trip and the events that took place around Klamath Lake (Bigelow 1856; Upham 1856, Vestal 1928, Nevins 1939, and others). All are in general agreement, with but minor variations of detail, on the events that took place on May 8, 1846 and the few days following.

The party had proceeded to the north end of Klamath Lake and, on May 8th, was overtaken by two men named Neal and Sigler. These were two of Fremont's old voyageurs and companions on previous expeditions. They reported that they were two of a guard of six men conducting a U.S. Marine officer, Lt. Archibald H. Gillespie, in search of Captain Fremont. They had been sent ahead two days previously to overtake the Captain. Lt. Gillespie had left Washington, D.C. the previous November to find Fremont and deliver certain dispatches to him. Captain Fremont selected eleven

men (variously stated as 9 and as 10, but 11 were named) to return with him to intercept Gillespie. These men were Kit Carson, his most trusted aide and friend who had accompanied him on earlier expeditions; Dick Owens, Carson's partner in a New Mexico ranch; the hunter, Lucien Maxwell; Alexis Godey, a distinguished frontiersman; Basil Lajeunesse, the Captain's favorite French voyageur and aide; another frontiersman named Stepp; four Delaware Indians, two of whom were named Crane and Sagundai; and a half-blood Iroquois named Denny (Vestal 1928: 220-21).

The morning of May 9, 1846 this party left the upper end of Klamath Lake and rode 60 miles down the western shore without a halt (Fig. 1) and met Lt. Gillespie and his four men about sundown (Bigelow 1856: 137-138). The events of that night and of the next few days are best told by Kit Carson in an article furnished to the Washington Union and printed in the issue of June 16, 1847, as quoted by Bigelow:

'Mr. Gillespie had brought the Colonel letters from home--the first he had had since leaving the States the year before--and he was up, and kept a large fire burning until after midnight; the rest of us were tired out, and all went to sleep. This was the only night in all our travels, except the one night on the island in the Salt Lake, that we failed to keep guard; and as the men were so tired, and we expected no attack now that we had sixteen in the party, the Colonel didn't like to ask it of them, but sat up late himself. Owens and I were sleeping together, and we were waked at the same time by the licks of the axe that killed our men. At first, I didn't know it was that; but I called to Basil, who was that side--'What's the matter there?--What's that fuss about?'--he never answered, for he was dead then, poor fellow, and he never knew what killed him--his head had been cut in, in his sleep; the other groaned a little as he died. The Delawares (we had four with us) were sleeping at that fire, and they sprang up as the Tlamath charged them. One of them caught up a gun, which was unloaded; but, although he could do no execution, he kept them at bay, fighting like a soldier, and didn't give up until he was shot full of arrows--three entering his heart; he died bravely. As soon as I had called out, I saw it was Indians in the camp, and I and Owens together cried out 'Indians.!' There were no orders given; things went on too fast, and the Colonel had men with him that didn't need to be told their duty. The Colonel and I, Maxwell, Owens, Godey, and Stepp, jumped together, we six, and ran to the assistance of our Delawares. I don't know who fired and who didn't; but I think it was Stepp's shot that killed the Tlamath chief; for it was at the crack of Stepp's gun that he fell. He had an English half-axe slung to his wrist by a cord, and there were forty arrows left in his quiver--the most beautiful and warlike arrows I ever saw. He must have been the bravest man among them, from the way he was armed, and judging by his cap. When the Tlamaths saw him fall, they ran; but we

lay, every man with his rifle cocked, until daylight, expecting another attack.

'In the morning we found by the tracks that from fifteen to twenty of the Tlamaths had attacked us. They had killed three of our men, and wounded one of the Delawares, who scalped the chief, whom we left where he fell. Our dead men we carried on mules; but, after going about ten miles, we found it impossible to get them any farther through the thick timber, and finding a secret place, we buried them under logs and chunks, having no way to dig a grave. It was only a few days before this fight that some of these same Indians had come into our camp; and, although we had only meat for two days, and felt sure that we should have to eat mules for ten or fifteen days to come, the Colonel divided with them, and even had a mule unpacked to give them some tobacco and knives.'

The party then retraced its way into California, and two days after this rencontre they met a large village of Tlamaths--more than a hundred warriors. Carson was ahead with ten men, but one of them having been discovered, he could not follow his orders, which were to send back word and let Fremont come up with the rest in case they found Indians. But as they had been seen, it only remained to charge the village, which they did, killing many, and putting the rest to flight. The women and children, Carson says, we didn't interfere with; but they burnt the village, together with their canoes and fishing nets. In a subsequent encounter, the same day, Carson's life was imminently exposed. As they galloped up he was rather in advance, when he observed an Indian fixing his arrow to let fly at him. Carson levelled his rifle, but it snapped, and in an instant the arrow would have pierced him, had not Fremont, seeing the danger, dashed his horse on the Indian and knocked him down. 'I owe my life to them two,' says Carson--'the Colonel and Sacramento saved me.' Sacramento is a noble Californian horse which Captain Sutter gave to Colonel Fremont in 1844, and which has twice made the distance between Kentucky and his native valley, where he earned his name by swimming the river after which he is called, at the close of a long day's journey. Notwithstanding all his hardships--for he has travelled everywhere with his master--he is still the favorite horse of Colonel Fremont (Bigelow 1856: 139-141).

Lt. Gillespie related the events of his approach to Klamath Lake and the subsequent meeting with Captain Fremont. Upham quotes Gillespie's statement before the Committee on Military Affairs of the United States Senate as follows:

'I started upon Captain Fremont's trail upon the 2d of May, much against the earnest appeals and advice of the settlers, who informed me that the Indians, through whose

country I would have to pass, were very hostile, and would, in all probability, defeat so small a party. However, considering their fears somewhat exaggerated, I determined to overtake Captain Fremont at all hazards. Upon the 7th of May, finding the signs of the camp very fresh, I ordered two of the men, Neal and Sigler, to proceed ahead upon the best and fleetest horses, to overtake and inform Captain Fremont of my approach. I arrived at the Tlamath Lake at sunset of the same day. Our provisions were exhausted, and game could not be found. Not being able to ford the river, the outlet of the lake, I determined to encamp upon its banks, hoping to hear the next morning from my men, or receive a message from Captain Fremont, whom I supposed at no great distance from me. We remained here until the morning of the 9th, full forty hours, without any thing to eat, when, at about 8 o'clock, a party of Indians came to us, a chief bringing me a fresh salmon just from the lake. They also brought two canoes, and took us across the lake, and showed us every disposition to be friendly. Riding about 30 miles over the mountains, I came to a party, about sunset, which proved to be Captain Fremont, with nine of his men, who had rode sixty miles that day to meet me'.

When Gillespie's men examined the body and countenance of the Indian, left dead in the camp, it was found to be the identical chief, who, the morning before, had brought the fresh salmon to them, and professed such exceeding friendliness of disposition towards them! (Upham 1856: 222-23)

Does this Fremont episode now appear to fit the story of the button belt? Could the village that Kit Carson burned two days after the Klamath attack (May 11, 1846) be Chilopsis? Village that he watched being attacked? It could have been. Some of the details of the two stories are at odds but, given that both would be biased accounts, they are not too far apart. Chilopsis said his people were out on "patrols". One of those patrols could have been the group that attacked Fremont's party. Carson said the village was one of about 100 men. If so some, or most, of those men must have been away for Carson's ten men to have been so successful, even with the superiority of guns in the hands of mountain men, over a surprised village of Indians with bows and arrows. It is clear that Carson lost no men in this attack or he would have reported that, since he went to such lengths to vividly describe the loss of three men only two days before.

Then where did the buttons come from? It could be that the "patrol" that had attacked Fremont returned to the village shortly after Carson had left it in ruins bringing the recovered bodies of Basil, Crane, and Denny or perhaps just bringing the buttons from the clothing on those bodies. We can be certain that after the attack on Fremont's camp these Indians remained close by, watching the "soldier's" every move. Finding the three bodies buried "beneath logs and chunks" would have been no problem.

There are 120 buttons on the belt (originally 121) and this would mean that if the buttons came off Basil, Crane, and Denny they would have averaged 40 buttons per body. This is too many to be reasonable but some of the buttons could have been added later from other sources. The Chiloquis story as told by Casey says "...the buttons indicated that between 21 and 24 men fell that day" (Casey 1965). There seems no apparent reason to conjecture any particular number of men merely from the number of buttons. Three bodies, indeed, seem too few but 21 bodies would provide less than six buttons each. At any rate, it is possible, from the reasoning developed from the documentary sources, that the belt could have originated with Fremont's expedition of May, 1846.

The apparent conflict between the Casey and the Kirk versions of the origin of the belt may resolve itself. We have seen that the Klamaths and the Modocs were friendly and united against outside enemies. It is to be noted that while Fremont's and Lt. Gillespie's parties both rode north through the Modoc territory, neither of them mentioned the word Modoc. All their references were to Klamaths. This suggests that these White explorers thought of the Modocs as a "band" of the Klamaths. It may well be, then, that Modocs and Klamaths were traveling together and attacked the Fremont party or that the attacks were actually Modocs in league with the Klamaths. This would account for Jesse Kirk's great uncle (a Modoc) being present to cut off the buttons. It would also accommodate the Chiloquis (a Klamath) story to a great extent. Chiloquis waited on the hill until all danger had subsided before going down into the village. If he waited until a "patrol" returned to the village that "patrol" might have brought back the three recovered White bodies and it was from this that Chiloquis recalls the cutting off of the buttons. The only real conflict is in the number of bodies. Casey reports 21 to 24 and Kirk reports 14 or 15. Both could simply result from the exaggeration of a long remembered story. If only the three bodies were involved then other buttons may well have been added to the belt in later years. We recall that Jesse Kirk said the belt was not made until sometime after the event when they had obtained some trade cloth from the Warm Springs Indians. That might have been several years later.

It is also possible that the button belt originated from a similar incident occurring either earlier or later than 1846. We have gone to some pains to point out that there were Whites, with buttons, in the area from the 1820's on and that by 1846, and after, that there were literally hundreds of White people moving through the Klamath-Modoc country. The events of the Chiloquis-Kirk stories could well have taken place in connection with any of these travelers. Any such incident might well be attributed to the Fremont expedition, the name of which was, and still is, so well known in the area.

#### DESCRIPTION OF THE BUTTON BELT

Let us now turn to the button belt itself (Fig. 2). It consists of a single piece of green fabric 51.5 inches long and 4.75 inches wide. The width varies slightly between 4.7 and 4.9 inches but is fairly consistent at 4.75. It is a thin fabric only 1.0 millimeter in thickness. One end of the fabric is rolled two turns on itself. The other end is rolled one



turn around a piece of course, brown, woolen cloth. Three rows of metal buttons are attached to the face of the green fabric by a single, well tanned, buckskin thong extending from one end to the other, back down the middle, and back to the other end. The thong has been broken in eleven places and tied together; in four places by replacing sections of the thong with common cotton string. In one place the string replaces 17 inches of thong. The buttons are attached by simple perforations in the cloth through which the loop of the button is inserted and the buckskin thong is then passed regularly through each button loop. A separate buckskin thong is laced through perforations across the width of the belt at the end in which the brown cloth is rolled up. The ends of this 18 inch thong hang loose. This thong runs through the brown cloth and securely fastens it within the roll of green fabric. On the opposite end the main button thong is extended out to form a double loop joining the three button rows together at that end.

The green fabric is finely woven and heavily felted on both sides. One long edge is selvaged the other has been cut, but cut very evenly. Uneven fading and wear have resulted in minor shade variations, especially on the reverse side of the belt. The cloth is actually quite thin to be considered apart of a blanket and has more the appearance of pool table cover cloth. Pursuing this possibility we secured several scraps of pool table cover cloth and found the button belt fabric to be very similar to one of the older styles of this cloth. The fabric of the button belt is clearly not a Hudson's Bay blanket. It appears to be a piece of mid-nineteenth century trade cloth sold to the Indians and perhaps used as a blanket but not originally made for that purpose. It will be recalled that Jesse Kirk specifically identified the source of the cloth as being from the Warm Springs Indians of central Oregon. The Warm Springs people were well known for their association with the Whites and were often used as guides and interpreters. They would be just the people to have had cloth of this kind.

The individual buttons are quite informative but they, too, leave some questions unanswered. There are 120 metal buttons attached to this strip of green cloth plus one space with a perforation in it where one button is now missing. Thus there were, at one time, 121 buttons. David Miller has identified these buttons to the extent possible from the literature at hand. These specific identifications are shown in Appendix A. To supplement our own identifications we sent a draft copy of the manuscript along with photos of the buttons to Mr. Alphaeus H. Albert, of Hightstown, New Jersey for his comments. Mr. Albert's published works were among the principal references used in the identifications (Albert 1969). Mr. Albert commented that "...the analysis of the buttons is thorough". He offered a few additional comments which led to the identification of the buttons in Type J and supported other identifications. These comments are noted in the appropriate places in Appendix A. We are, indeed, grateful to Mr. Albert for his interest.

Of the 120 buttons present, 78 have dates of origin prior to 1846; 32 have dates after 1846; 7 buttons date between 1840 and 1854; and three remain undated. Of the 7 that date 1840-1854, Mr. Albert indicates a date of 1851 so they may well be after the 1846 event. This provides at least 32 and perhaps 39 buttons that could not possibly have been associated with

John C. Fremont. It also provides at least 78 buttons that could have been a result of Fremont's visit.

The grouping of the buttons on the cloth is of interest. The post-1846 buttons, with three exceptions, are grouped at one end of the belt. The 1840-54 buttons and the Centennial buttons (1875-90) are grouped in a row along one side of the belt. Buttons of a single general appearance tend to be grouped together. This grouping suggests that the belt had originally been made of about 85 or 90 buttons with a blank section of cloth at one end. At some later date additional buttons were added in the blank section and several of the buttons in the earlier section, having been lost, were replaced by later buttons. The very late Centennial buttons being along one edge row, would suggest that the thong in this row had broken, at a still later date, losing still more of the original buttons and that these were replaced in the 1880's or 1890's with the Centennial and the 1840-1854 buttons. This would also suggest that the fabric was the original and not a replacement.

#### CONCLUSIONS

It seems clear from the foregoing that the button belt could be identified with the documented event of Fremont's visit of May 11, 1846. If so, that event provided only some of the buttons and the original belt was not put together until such time as several other early White intruders into the Klamath-Modoc country had been relieved of their buttons. It is also apparent that the belt could have originated with any of numerous incidents between Indians and Whites in the period of the 1830's through the 1850's and the name of Fremont became attached to the event because Fremont was so well known. A third possibility is that the belt originated from an old button collection and was put together in the 1870's or 1880's and has nothing to do with the Chilquis-Kirk story. In either interpretation it is clear that there are buttons of the pre-1846 period and that there are buttons that were not made until the 1850's, '60's, and '70's.

Personal acquaintance with the Klamath and Modoc people and their reliability in matters of this kind of oral history leads us to discount the third possibility. Even though sewing buttons on a strip of cloth was a well-known custom of button collecting in the late nineteenth century, it was primarily a White custom. It could have been adopted by the Indians but it seems improbable in this instance. This would mean that the Chilquis-Kirk story was an invention of the Klamath-Modoc imagination, a possibility that we are reluctant to accept. The story is from two sources, the Klamaths through Chilquis and the Modocs through Jesse Kirk's great uncle. Both are essentially the same. Both have come down in oral tradition through several generations. If it were a false story other Klamaths and Modocs would have laughed the tellers into at least an uncomfortable social position.

Either of the first two interpretations remain as viable possibilities. Whether we accept the specific Fremont event as the origin or some other similar event seems rather immaterial. It is quite apparent that the belt was made at about mid-century and that the buttons derived from an incident as related by Chilquis and Kirk. It is certain that other buttons were added later, some as late as after 1875. Our main doubt about the specific

Fremont association is our acquaintance with the popularity of attributing nearly anything that happened in mid-century in that area to John C. Fremont. This may not be a very valid doubt.

Aside from the identification of the button belt we have attempted to indicate something of the relationship between the Indians of the area and the Whites as well as between the Indian tribes themselves. We have seen the attitude of the White explorers when Fremont fired his cannon to impress the Klamaths on his first visit and the attitude of the Klamaths in response when they at first declined then agreed to guide him and his party on their way. We watched these attitudes on the part of both the Indians and the Whites in their contacts in 1846 and have some perspective on the period from the words of both cultures.

These were not easy times for either culture. It is never easy for two cultures so vastly different to make their initial contacts. Each was suspiciously "feeling the other out" not knowing how antagonistic the other would be nor how to anticipate the attitudes and actions of the other. Inter-cultural understanding and harmony must depend upon each culture's knowledge of the other. This knowledge was not, and could not, be available to either at that time. Both were defensive; as they had to be. It is easy, a century later, to sit in judgment on how people were savage or cruel or arrogant or intollerant in a particular situation. It was not that easy at the time. We hope that some understanding of both the Klamath-Modoc feelings and those of the White explorers can be gained from this study. "Let us not criticize the stranger until we have walked a mile in his moccasins."

## APPENDIX A

### THE BUTTON TYPES AND VARIANTS

For identification the 120 buttons are divided into ten types. Each type is based upon the physical appearance, both decoration, if any, and construction. A description of each type is given, followed by the listing and description of variations when they occur. The date of the button type or variant follows the description along with reference for the date assigned.

#### Type A (19 examples)

**Description:** Domed, two-piece brass button. Face decorated with the line eagle device. The eye is made of brass or copper and is well soldered. Some buttons have blank backs while others have the manufacturer's inscription in relief or intaglio. Some also have concentric lines or dots. The sizes vary from 19.0 mm. to 20.5 mm. in diameter.

**A1:** Button #1\* (Fig. 4)

General service button, 19.0 mm. in diameter. The back has concentric lines in relief (Fig. 3). The eye is made of brass.  
DATE: After 1850, Johnson #261F, S-Type (Johnson 1948: 65-66).

**A2:** Buttons #35, 117\* (Fig. 4)

General service buttons, 20.5 mm. in diameter. Back is lettered in intaglio "HORSTMAN BROS. & CO. PHILA", and has concentric dots. The eye is made of copper.  
DATE: 1864-1866 (Johnson 1948: 217). None of Johnson's types actually match these in appearance. The date comes from the listing of this manufacturer's dates in the back of Johnson's book.

**A3:** Buttons #36, 39, 76, 77, 79, 114\* (Fig. 4)

General service buttons, 20.0 mm. in diameter. Back is lettered in relief "WATERBURY - SCOVILL MFG CO". The eye is made of brass.  
DATE: After 1860, Johnson #263A, S-Type (Johnson 1948: 65-66).  
1859-1870, Olsen and Campbell, Type O (Olsen and Campbell 1962: 348-349). 1854, Albert, G1/94-3 (Albert 1969: 40).

**A4:** Button #38\* (Fig. 4)

General service button, 19.5 mm. in diameter. Back is lettered in relief "WATERBURY CO\*". The eye is made of brass.  
DATE: After 1850, Johnson #263D, S-Type (Johnson 1948: 65-66).

**A5:** Button #37\* (Fig. 4)

General service button, 19.25 mm. in diameter. Back has one concentric line around the eye. The eye is made of brass.  
DATE: After 1850, Johnson #261E, S-Type (Johnson 1948: 65-66).

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\* Button numbers refer to schematic drawing, Fig. 2.

#### Type A (Continued)

- A6: Button #40\* (Fig. 4)  
General service button, 19.5 mm. in diameter. Back is lettered in intaglio "WM LANG BOSTON, MASS". Also has concentric lines. Eye is made of copper.  
DATE: After 1850, Johnson #263N, S-Type (Johnson 1948: 65-66).
- A7: Button #80\* (Fig. 4)  
General service button, 19.5 mm. in diameter. Back lettered in relief "WATERBURY BUTTON CO.\*". Eye is made of brass.  
DATE: After 1850, Johnson #263C, S-Type (Johnson 1948: 65-66).
- A8: Buttons #81 and 85\* (Fig. 4)  
General service buttons, 19 mm. in diameter. Back decorated with concentric lines. Eye is made of brass.  
DATE: After 1850, Johnson #261E, S-Type (Johnson 1948: 65-66).
- A9: Button #115\* (Fig. 4)  
General service button, 19.25 mm. in diameter. Back decorated with concentric lines. Eye is made of brass.  
DATE: After 1850, Johnson #261I, S-Type (Johnson 1948: 65-66).
- A10: Button #118\* (Fig. 4)  
General service button, 19.5 mm. in diameter. Back lettered in relief "HORSTMAN \* ALLEN N.Y." Eye is made of copper.  
DATE: 1852-1877, Johnson #263L, S-Type (Johnson 1948: 65-66 and 217).
- A11: Button #120 (Fig. 4)  
General service button, 19 mm. in diameter. Lettered on back in intaglio "EXTRA\*\*\*QUALITY" also has concentric lines. Eye is made of brass.  
DATE: After 1850, Johnson #262E, S-Type (Johnson 1948: 65-66).

#### Type B (11 examples)

Description: Domed, three-piece button with the line eagle device on the front. Service letter on shield. Some of the buttons are made of brass while others are made of copper. The copper buttons are giled. The eye made of copper and well soldered. Back has manufacturer's inscription with concentric lines. The size varies from 22.5 mm. to 23 mm.

- B1: Buttons #75, 99 and 104\* (Fig. 4)  
Infantry buttons, 23 mm. in diameter with moline "I" on the shield. Back is lettered in intaglio "WATERBURY SCOVILL MFG CO" with concentric lines. These buttons are copper with gilt characteristics.  
DATES: 1840-1854, Johnson #199A, S-Type (Johnson 1948: 50).  
1851, Albert G1/89-1 (Albert 1969: 38).

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\* Button numbers refer to schematic drawing, Fig. 2.

Type C (1 example) (Fig. 5)

Description: Button #8\* is a two-piece, brass button with eagle in flight, head lowered and to the left. In left talon there are three arrows and in right talon an olive branch. Under the eagle are the letters "U.S." and below this a wreath. Back is lettered in relief "UNITED\*\*STATES" with concentric dots. Diameter is 20 mm. and 1.5 mm. in thickness. The letters on front are 5 mm. high. This button is the Great Coat Button and dates from the 1820's (Johnson 1948: 65).

Type D (1 example) (Figs. 3 & 5)

Description: Button #47\* is a domed, two-piece button. The front is brass with a copper eye. The back of the button has two concentric lines. The diameter is 20 mm. No date could be found.

Type E (1 example) (Figs. 3 & 5)

Description: Button #51\* is made similar to Type D with a one-piece brass body and a copper eye. The shape of the button is unique in that the edges angle at about 45° then flatten out. The diameter is 20.25 mm. The angled edge is 2 mm. high then flattens out. No date could be found.

Type F (9 examples)

Description: Plain faced, coin shaped button made of brass or copper. Size of the buttons varies from 17.75 mm. to 19 mm. in diameter and between 1 mm. and 1.5 mm. in thickness. All of the buttons have the manufacturer's inscription on the back. This type is similar to South's Type 18 in a dated context of 1800-1865 (South 1963: 120).

F1: Buttons #4, 5, 6, 7, 44, 82, and 84\* (Fig. 5)  
Brass buttons, 17.75 mm. in diameter and 1.5 mm. in thickness with copper eye. Back has Old English lettering in intaglio "BEST STRONG STAND<sup>d</sup>"  
DATE: 1800-1865 (South 1963: 120).

F2: Button #46\* (Fig. 5)  
Copper button, 19 mm. in diameter and 1 mm. thick. Evidence on the back and on the eye of gilt. Back lettered in intaglio "LONDON BEST GILT" with olive branches.  
DATE: 1800-1865 (South 1963: 120).

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\* Button numbers refer to schematic drawing, Fig. 2.

- B2: Button #96\* (Fig. 4)  
 Infantry button, 22.5 mm. in diameter with moline "I" on the shield. Back lettered in intaglio, "WATERBURY BUTTON CO. WATERBURY CON.", with concentric dots. The button is made of copper with the gilt characteristics.  
 DATE: 1840-1854, Johnson #199E, S-Type (Johnson 1948: 50).  
1851, Albert G1/89-2 (Albert 1969: 38).
- B3: Buttons #102 and 106 (Fig. 4)  
 Infantry buttons, 23 mm. in diameter with Roman "I" on the shield. The back is lettered in intaglio "D. EVANS & CO. ATTLEBORO MASS", with concentric dots. Button is made of copper with gilt characteristics.  
 DATE: 1840-1854, Johnson #199J, S-Type (Johnson 1948: 51).  
1851, Albert G1/88A-2 (Albert 1969: 38).
- B4: Button #116\* (Fig. 4)  
 Infantry button, 22.5 mm. in diameter with Roman "I" on the shield. The back is lettered in intaglio "HORSTMANN BROS\$ CO\*PHIL" with concentric lines. Button is made of brass with copper eye.  
 DATE: 1840-1854, Johnson #199S, S-Type (Johnson 1948: 51).
- B5: Button #41\* (Fig. 5)  
 Artillery button, 19.25 mm. in diameter with "A" on the shield. Back lettered in intaglio "ROBINSONS JONES & CO.\*A\*" with concentric dots and line. Also has another design around the eye (Fig. 3). Button is made of brass.  
 DATE: 1821-1830, Johnson #147B, O-Type (Johnson 1948: 41).  
1821, Albert AY/64-2 (Albert 1969: 57).
- B6: Buttons #78 and 95 (Fig. 5)  
 Cavalry buttons, 23 mm. in diameter with "C" on shield. Back lettered in intaglio "EXTRA\*\*\*QUALITY" with concentric dots (Fig. 3). Buttons are made of copper with gilt characteristics.  
 DATE: 1855-1870, Johnson #215M, S-Type or #251F, S-Type (Johnson 1948: 62). After 1855 (Albert 1973).

Comments: This is an officer's button indicated by the appearance of "C" on the face. In 1854 all enlisted personnel had buttons without the letter while the officers kept the letter until 1902 Johnson's #251M is similar in dimensions, wing angles and number of tail feathers (Johnson 1948: 62-63).

- B7: Button #111\* (Fig. 5)  
 Confederate States officer's button, 23.25 mm. in diameter. Front designed with eagle surrounded by eleven, five pointed stars. The back has concentric dots and lettered in intaglio "HT & B \* MANCHESTER\*". Button is made of copper and gilded. The eye is brass.  
 DATE: 1861, Albert SC/4 Army officer (Albert 1969: 347).  
1861-65 (Albert 1973).

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\* Button numbers refer to schematic drawing, Fig. 2.

F3: Button #88\* (Fig. 5)  
Copper button, 18.75 mm. in diameter and 1.25 mm. thick.  
Evidence of gilt on the back and on the eye. Lettered on the back in intaglio "TREBLE GILT N.W.S." Surrounded by a small olive branch and concentric dots.  
DATE: 1800-1865 (South 1963: 120).

Type G (1 example) (Figs. 3 & 5)

Description: Button #52\* is a flat brass button, 20 mm. in diameter and 1 mm. thick. The eye was attached when the button was cast giving the attachment area a conical appearance (Fig. 3). This style is similar to South's Type 7 which is dated in context 1726-1776 (South 1963: 117). Olsen also identifies a similar style and dates it 1760 to 1785. Olsen mentions that this type button was used by both the civilian and military population (Olsen 1965: 31-32).  
DATE: 1726-1776 (South 1963: 117). 1760-1785 (Olsen 1965: 31-32).

Type H (65 examples) (Fig. 5)

Description: Flat, brass buttons with copper eye. There are two sizes, the larger ones measure 25 to 27.75 mm. in diameter and are 1 mm. to 1.25 mm. thick. The smaller buttons are 21 mm. in diameter and .5 mm. thick. Some of the larger buttons show signs of tooling on the back. All of the buttons of this type were stamped out by machine. They are similar to South's Type 9 which he dated in context 1726-1776 (South 1963: 118). Olsen's Type "G" is also similar and he gives a manufacture date of 1785-1800 (Olsen 1965: 31-32).

H1: Buttons #2, 3, 9, 10, 11, 12, 42, 43, 45, 48, 49, 50, 53, 83, 86, 87, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 112 and 113\*.  
These are the smaller buttons of this type and are slightly domed.  
DATE: 1726-1776 (South 1963: 118). 1785-1800 (Olsen 1965: 31-32).

H2: Buttons #14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73 and 74.  
These are the larger buttons with some tooling on the back.  
DATE: 1726-1776 (South 1963: 118). 1785-1800 (Olsen 1965: 31-32).

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\* Button numbers refer to schematic drawing, Fig. 2.



Type I (1 example) (Fig. 5)

Description: Button #110\* is a one-piece bronze button, 24.75 mm. in diameter and 1.25 mm. in thickness. The front has a Phoenix bird rising out of flames and around the edge is the inscription "Je Renaiss De Mes Cendres" which is French and translates "I rise again from my ashes." At the bottom of the button is the number 4 representing the regiment. DATE: Early 1800's (Emory Strong 1965: 29-30).

Comments: Buttons of this type were made in England and were supposed to be delivered to King Christophe of Haiti. Before they could be delivered King Christophe was overthrown and independent traders took them for barter purposes. Many of these buttons have been found along the Pacific Coast from California to Washington (Strong 1965: 29-30).

Type J (10 examples) (Figs. 3 & 5)

Description: This is a four-piece button (Fig. 3). The front piece is made of porcelain or milk glass. The brass piece encasing the front is crimped over the back. The back is of iron. A brass eye is held firmly in place on the inside of the button. There are two varieties of this button type.

J1: Buttons #97, 100, 101, 103, 105, 107, and 108\*. The smaller buttons are 23 mm. in diameter. The front piece of porcelain or milk glass is in the form of a white cross on a black background. The cross has a floral design with vertical, diagonal, and horizontal incised marks. The back has the German inscription "EXTRA FEIN" with concentric rows of dots. Alphaeus H. Albert states that these are buttons of the "Centennial Period". DATE: 1875-1890 (Albert 1973).

J2: Buttons #94, 98, 109  
The larger buttons of this type are 26.5 mm. in diameter. The front piece of porcelain or milk glass is a white circular area with five stars radiating out in a circle from a sixth star. The stars are connected by arcs of dots and the background has incised lines on it. Albert states that these, too, are buttons of the "Centennial Period".  
DATE: 1875-1890 (Albert 1973).

Type K (1 example) (Figs. 3 & 5)

Description: Button #13\* is a plain button with a brass front crimped over an iron back. The iron eye is attached by the foot of the eye bent under the iron back as in Figure 4. No date could be found.

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\* Button numbers refer to schematic drawing, Fig. 2.

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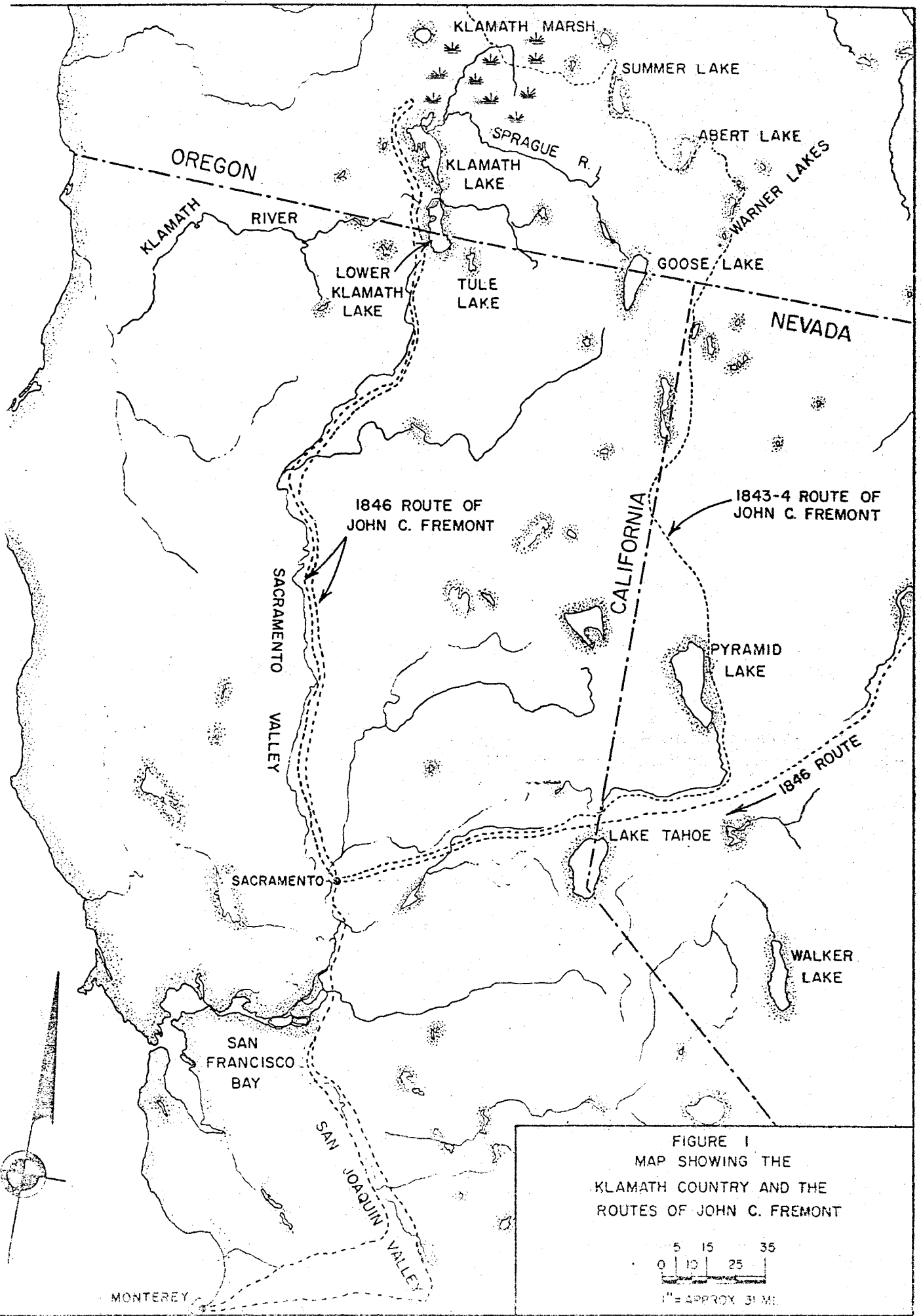


FIGURE 1  
MAP SHOWING THE  
KLAMATH COUNTRY AND THE  
ROUTES OF JOHN C. FREMONT

5 15 35  
0 10 25  
1" = APPROX 31 MI.

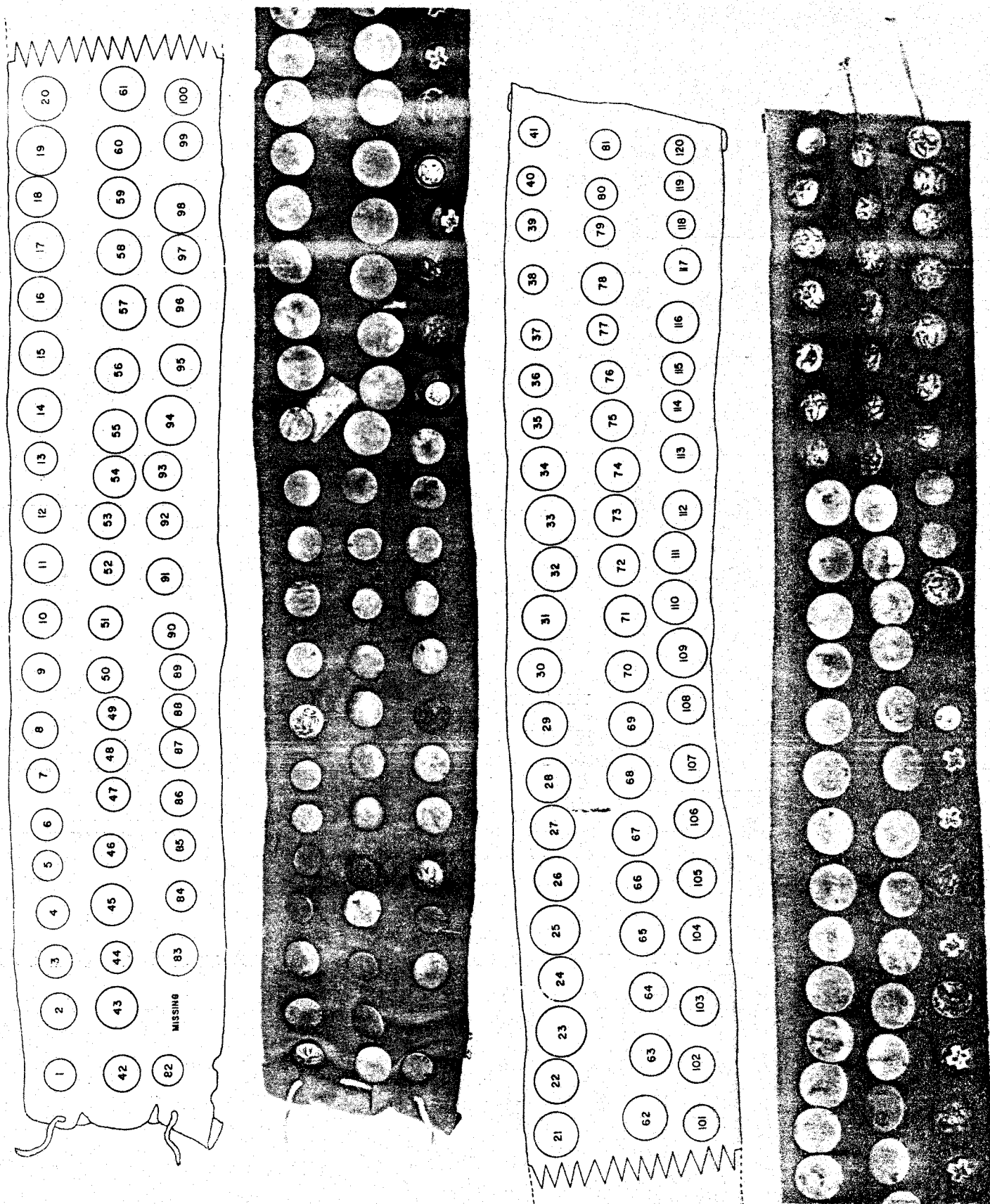
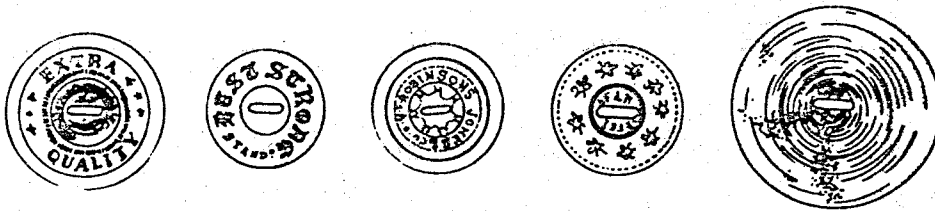


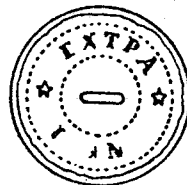
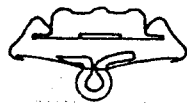
FIGURE 2

# PHOTOGRAPH AND SCHEMATIC DRAWING OF THE JESSE KIRK BUTTON BELT

In the schematic drawing those marked with a line beneath the number are Post-1846; with a line above the number indicate 1840-1890; with an x above the number are Centennial buttons of 1875-1890. Others are Pre-1846.

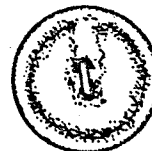
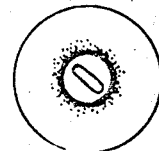


# VARIOUS INSCRIPTIONS AND DECORATIONS ON THE BACKS OF BUTTONS



TYPE J

TYPE K



TYPE D

TYPE G

TYPE E

## UNUSUAL BUTTON CONSTRUCTION

FIGURE 3

## BUTTON TYPES

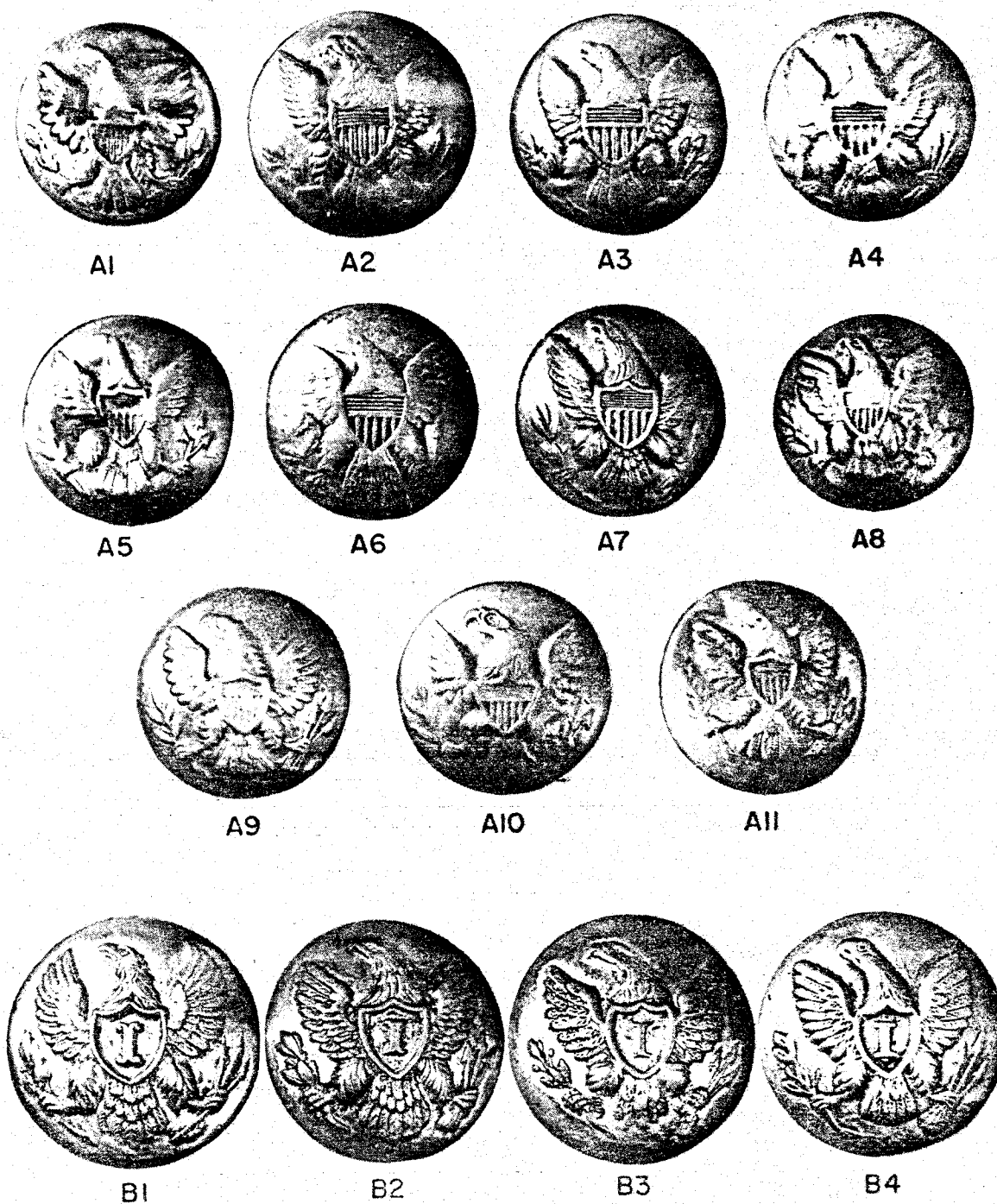


FIGURE 4



# BUTTON TYPES

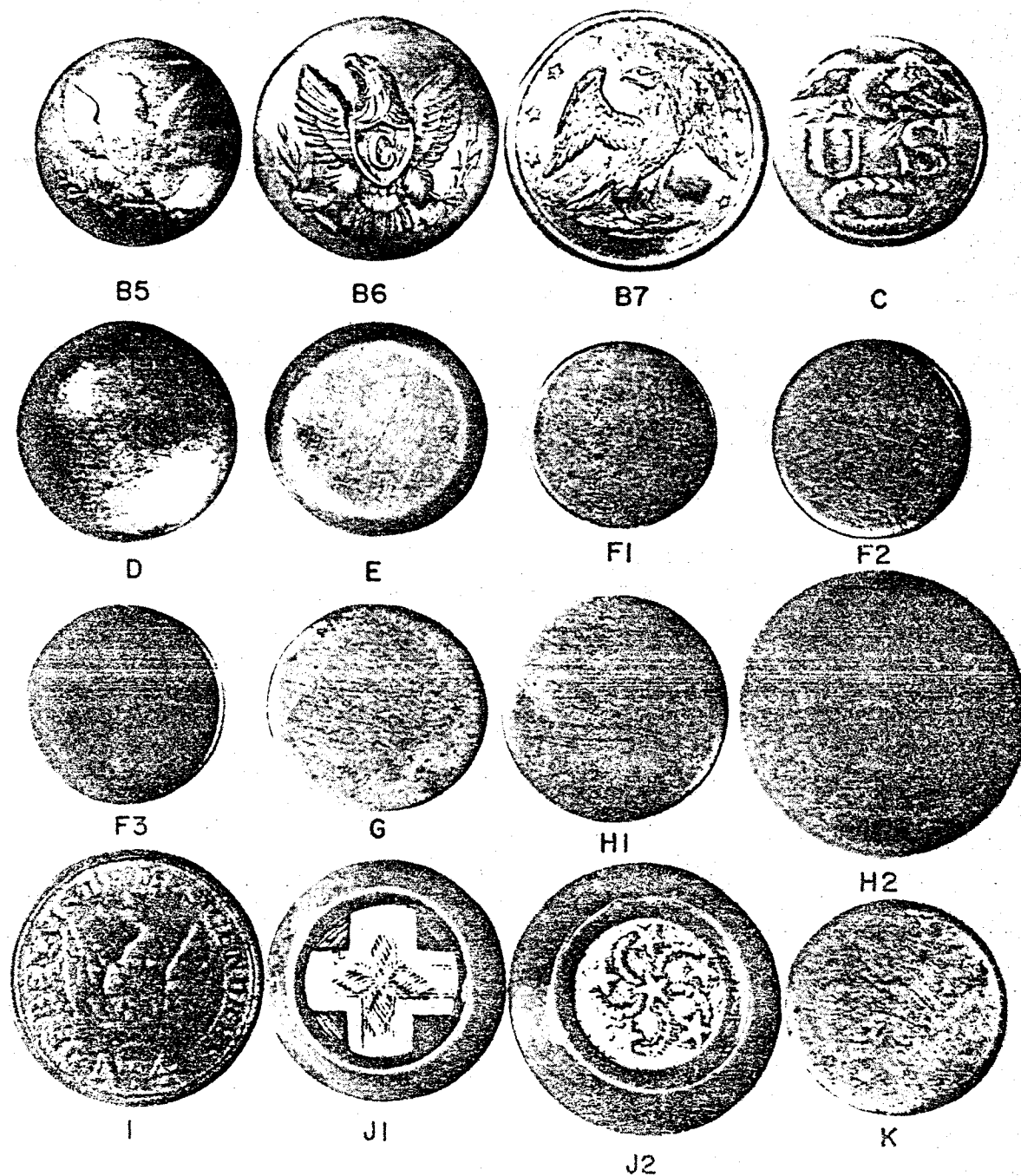


FIGURE 5