

MAMMALIAN REMAINS

by

Sherri Gust with Peter D. Schulz

Archaeological Consulting and Research Services  
Santa Cruz, California



## INTRODUCTION

### SITE DESCRIPTION

The mammalian remains analyzed in this chapter were recovered during archaeological excavations of 19th-century deposits located on the J/K/6/7 block in the commercial district of Sacramento, California. The archaeological features encountered were unique in that they resulted from upper-class sources. They therefore provide an unusual opportunity to investigate the economic characteristics of such deposits in Sacramento.

The focus of this excavation was the Golden Eagle Hotel. Founded in 1851, it maintained a reputation as one of Sacramento's finest hotels for much of its 100-plus years of existence. Evidence of the hotel's status is easily obtained from local newspapers, which carried an exclusive daily item on arrivals and departures at the Golden Eagle Hotel. The papers' society columns reported on important dinners held there. For instance, in 1869 a banquet given for the officers of the Central Pacific Railroad was attended by the Big Four (Stanford, Huntington, Hopkins, and Crocker), Admiral Farragut, and numerous other dignitaries (Sacramento Bee and Sacramento Union 29 September 1869).

Archaeological exploration of architectural features related to buildings of the Golden Eagle led to partial excavation of adjoining lots. One of these parcels had been the site of W. Cronin's Golden Eagle Oyster Saloon, which operated next door to the hotel during the 1870s. Cronin had worked at the Golden Eagle Hotel for 11 years prior to opening his oyster saloon in 1874.

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

Four features of the Golden Eagle excavation were selected for intensive analysis due to their undisturbed state and clear date ranges. Feature 20 is associated with the Golden Eagle Hotel's restaurant and dates to around 1860. Feature 8 is also associated with the hotel and dates to the mid to late 1860s. Features 15 and 6, associated with Cronin's oyster saloon, were deposited between 1874 and 1878.

All soil from features 8 and 6 was screened through 1/4-inch mesh; 1/8-inch mesh was used for Feature 20 and part of Feature 15. All fragments of bone recovered were retained. The bone was cleaned, sorted, and catalogued by personnel of the Sonoma State University Cultural Resources Facility. Identifications were made by the authors using the comparative faunal collections of the Archaeological Laboratory, California Department of Parks and Recreation, and of the Museum of Anthropology, University of California, Davis.

Taxon, element, and side were specified for each piece of identifiable bone (for definition of these terms see Chaplin 1971). Additionally, all butchering marks were noted, and each butchered bone, pictorially recorded per Lyman (1979a).

## RESULTS

### BEEF, MUTTON, AND PORK

Bones of domestic meat animals usually constitute the major portion of historic faunas. The analysis of these bones is particularly rewarding in the urban commercial context. The wealth of pertinent documentation coupled with information available from the archaeological remains allows exploration of many issues.

Butchering is a matter of major concern in historical faunas. The results of an intensive butchering study on old Sacramento faunas, including the Golden Eagle collection, will be fully described in the future (Gust, in press). Indications are that meat was cut into standard pieces much as is the practice today. The particular pieces of butchered bone present in the Golden Eagle sample are typical of 19th-century commercial eateries.

Determination of the relative contributions of beef, mutton, and pork to the diet is important for the insight into meat preferences it provides. Table 3.1 gives several measures of frequency for the three species: beef (*Bos*), mutton (*Ovis*), and pork (*Sus*). The best of these approximations is provided by Lyman's (1979b) method, which results in percentages of meat by weight. This method shows beef to be dominant in all Golden Eagle features, with mutton and pork present in varying, but relatively small, amounts.

Cumulative frequencies for the Golden Eagle Hotel and Cronin's oyster saloon are compared in figure 3.1 with frequency data from other old Sacramento sites (Gust and Schulz, unpublished data) and with records of sales by a Sacramento butcher (Strickert 1856). The differences in the types and amounts of meat bought by restaurants and hotels, saloons, and private parties are apparent. The close correlation of the archaeological frequencies to those from the butcher's records implies functional differentiation. In other words, there seems to be significant and contrasting patterning in the types and amounts of meat utilized locally in saloons, in restaurants (including hotel restaurants), and in the home. Accumulation of more frequency data from archaeological sites with known functions will be required to fully test these tentative results.

Bone data can also make a contribution to the determination of socioeconomic standing. Since the relative values of different cuts of meat are available from documentary sources, frequencies of occurrence of bones representing different cuts should indicate economic status. Table 3.2 gives percents of meat weight (figured using Lyman 1979b) from the major carcass divisions recovered from each feature, as well as totals for the hotel and oyster saloon. These carcass divisions represent meat cuts of differing quality and value. Perusal of the table shows that almost 60 percent of the meat represented were highly desirable cuts: loin, rib, leg, and ham. Middle-value cuts make up over 30 percent, leaving less than 10 percent inexpensive cuts. The fact that these percentages are virtually equal for both the Golden Eagle Hotel and Cronin's oyster saloon is a significant indication of their equivalent status.

TABLE 3.1

## Comparative Species Values

	Golden Eagle Hotel			Cronin's Oyster Saloon		
	<u>Feature 20</u>	<u>Feature 8</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Feature 15</u>	<u>Feature 6</u>	<u>Total</u>
Fragment Counts						
Bos	5	110	115	67	161	228
Ovis	25	71	96	117	84	201
Sus	80	25	105	144	89	233
Minimum Number of Individuals						
Bos	1	3	4	2	1	3
Ovis	1	4	5	5	3	8
Sus	1	3	4	7	3	10
Lyman's Meat Weight of Butchering Units (in percent)						
Bos	50	73	69	40	79	63
Ovis	25	18	20	25	6	14
Sus	25	9	11	35	15	23

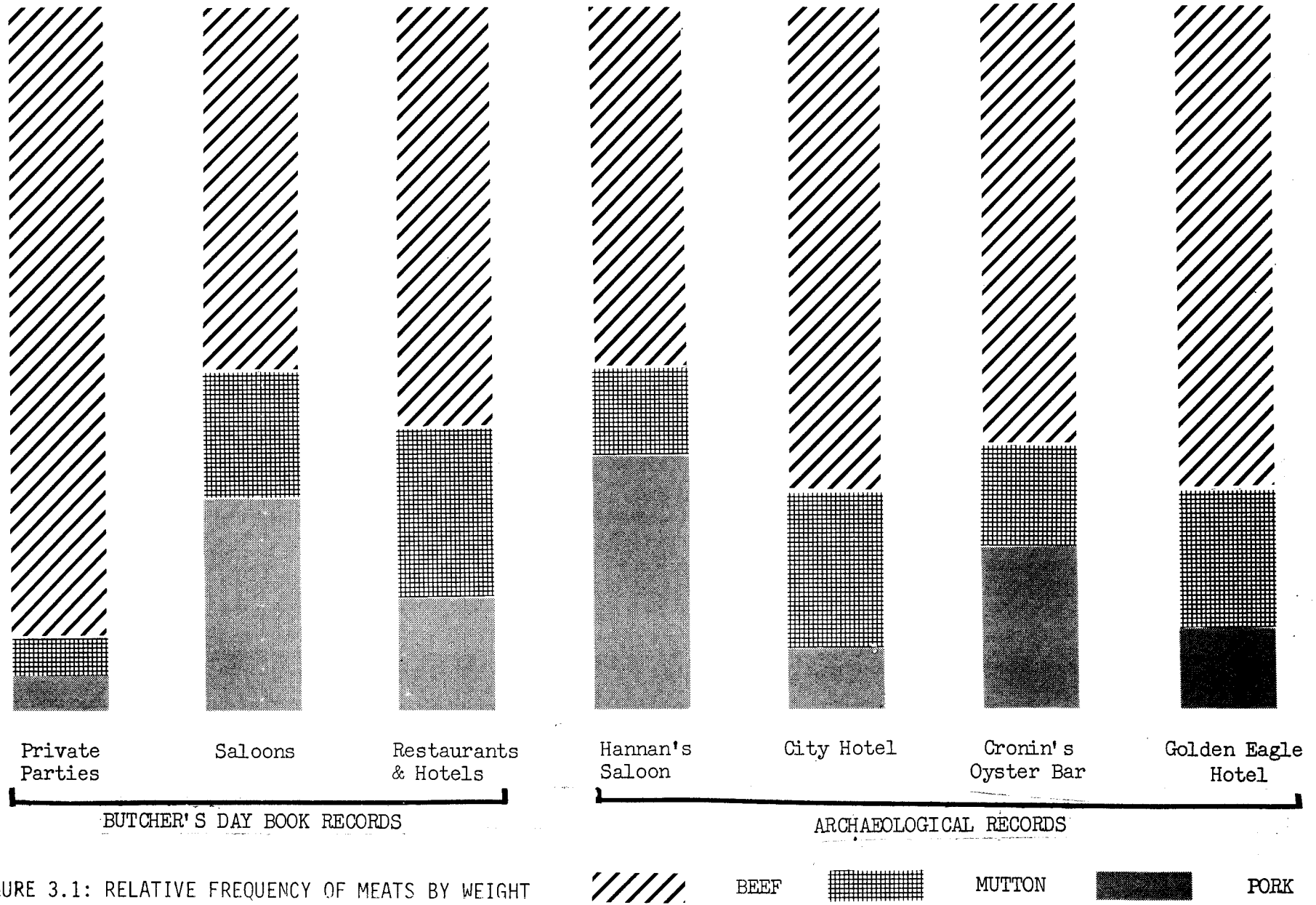


FIGURE 3.1: RELATIVE FREQUENCY OF MEATS BY WEIGHT

/// BEEF    [cross-hatch] MUTTON    [solid black] PORK

TABLE 3.2  
 Percentages of Total Meat Weight for Carcass Divisions  
 with Minimum Butchering Units

	Feature 20		Feature 8		Feature 15		Feature 6		Golden Eagle Hotel	Cronin's Oyster Saloon
	MBU	%	MBU	%	MBU	%	MBU	%	%	%
BEEF										
loin	1	19	3	14	1	8	2	12	15	10
ribs			6	17	2	11	8	30	15	23
round			5	18			1	5	15	3
rump			2	2	2	3	1	1	1	2
chuck	1	30	2	14	1	14	3	28	17	22
plate					2	3				1
foreshank			6	6			2	2	5	1
neck					4	1	1			1
hindshank			2	2			1	1	1	1
PORK										
ham	2	8	3	4	9	16	4	5	4	9
loin	1	14	1	3	1	6	1	4	5	5
picnic ham	1	2	3	2	3	3	5	3	2	3
shoulder			1	1	5	4	4	2	1	3
jowl					7	6				2
MUTTON										
leg	4	12	7	5	4	5	2	2	6	3
loin	3	6	3	1	2	2	3	2	2	2
rib	4	7	25	9	13	9			8	4
chuck			5	3	8	8	3	2	2	3
breast					4	2				1
foreshank	1	1	6	1			6	1	1	1
									100%	100%

The high socioeconomic position of the Golden Eagle's clientele is more dramatically reflected in figure 3.2. Here, frequencies of beef cuts ranked by value are compared for four 19th-century Sacramento sites (Schulz 1979; Gust and Schulz, unpublished data). The contrast between the Golden Eagle at one extreme and the City Jail at the other is very clear.

#### SMALL GAME MAMMALS

Two types of small game are present in the fauna: rabbits and squirrels. The term "rabbit" is used here in the vernacular sense, applying both to true rabbits and to hares, which are called jackrabbits in the west. Accounts of the "...countless heaps of hares, rabbits, and squirrels..." in the San Francisco market in 1854 (Mollhausen 1969:355) suggest the abundance of these animals in early California.

A large number of rabbit bones was recovered from the site, with the vast majority from Feature 15 (see table 3.3). A sample from this feature was further analyzed for generic affiliation. Cottontail rabbit bones outnumbered bones of the jackrabbit more than 2 to 1. No specimens of the domestic rabbit were identified.

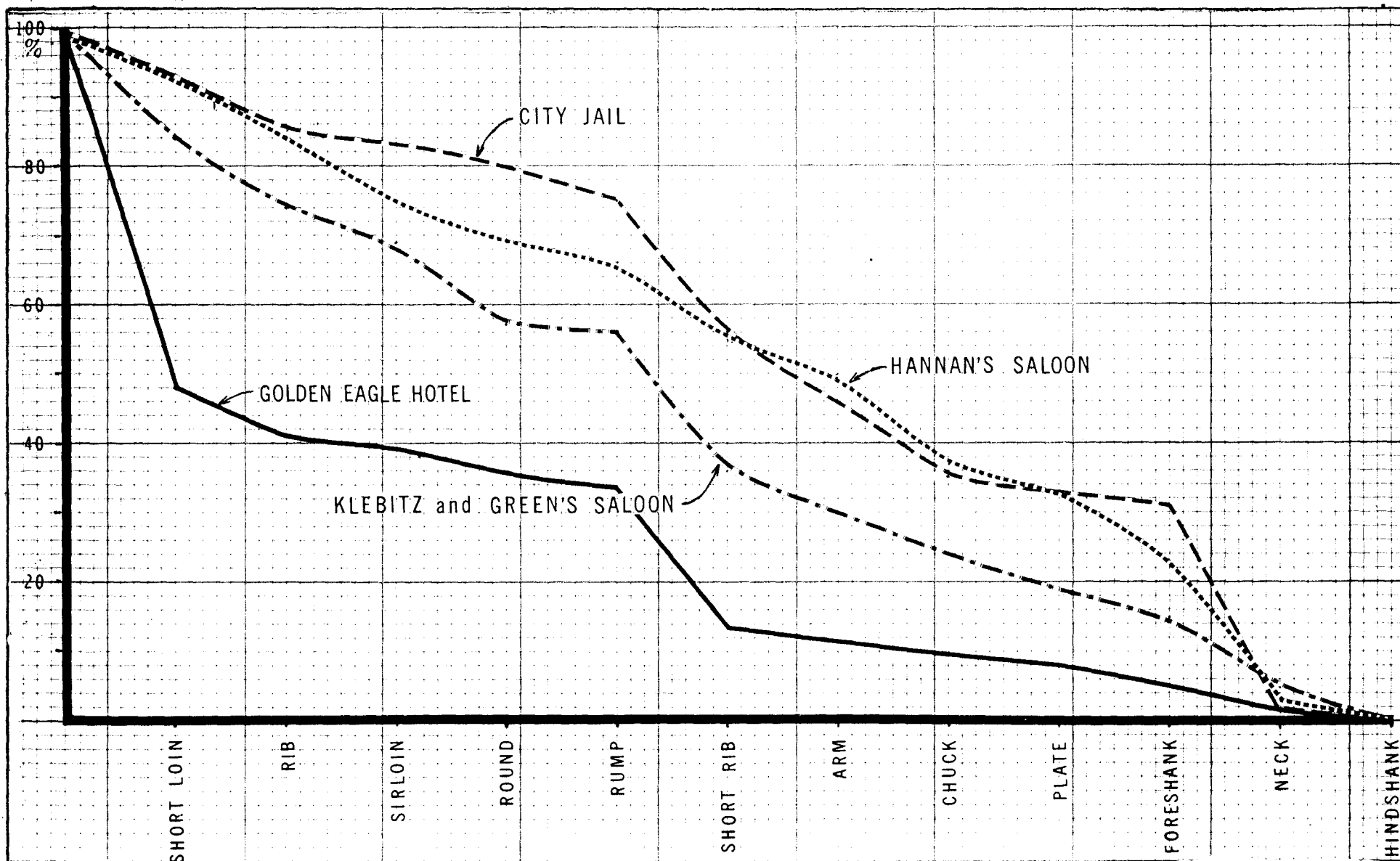
Tree squirrels of the genus *Sciurus* are common game throughout the country (Dalrymple 1978). The squirrel bones from Feature 15, however, are from ground squirrels of the genus *Citellus*. Many of these bones bear distinct knife scores, and the portions of bones represented are similar to those for rabbits. These factors leave no doubt that the ground squirrels were food items, although possibly not always overt ones. According to several market hunters, ground squirrels were bagged in lots of 8-10 dozen per day and "sold by the markets as 'rabbits'" (Twining 1939). Jacobsen (1918) also mentioned the suitability of ground squirrels as rabbit substitutes, particularly in relation to commercial eating establishments.

While the idea of eating ground squirrels seems undesirable today, it should be remembered that their role as carriers of the bubonic plague was not proven until 1908. Prior to that time, countless ground squirrels were marketed, and recipes for squirrel fricassee appeared often (Jacobsen 1918).

#### Butchering

Animals in this size range all seem to be butchered in similar manners. There are several methods, depending on the recipe. An occasional recipe calls for merely quartering the body, but the vast majority involve cutting the carcass into serving pieces (Ashbrook 1955; Fitzgibbon 1963; Hering 1958; Montagne 1977; New Mexico Wildlife Federation n.d.; Wigginton 1972).

The serving pieces produced are dependent upon the size and degree of musculature of each animal. Although these differences result in variation in the exact placement of cuts, clear butchering patterns can be discerned. The cutting patterns shown in figure 3.3 were reconstructed from the rabbit and squirrel bones recovered from Cronin's oyster saloon.



3-7

FIGURE 3.2 CUMULATIVE FREQUENCIES OF ELEMENTS FROM SECONDARY BEEF CUTS

CUTS RANKED BY VALUE

TABLE 3.3

## Small Mammals

(number of fragments/minimum number of individuals)

	Golden Eagle Hotel		Cronin's Oyster Saloon	
	<u>Feature 20</u>	<u>Feature 8</u>	<u>Feature 15</u>	<u>Feature 6</u>
Rabbits		8/2	110/10	1/1
Cottontail ( <i>Sylvilagus</i> sp.)			52/7	
Jackrabbit ( <i>Lepus</i> sp.)			22/5	
Ground Squirrels ( <i>Citellus</i> sp.)			86/9	
Cats ( <i>Felis catus</i> )			1/1	
Rats ( <i>Rattus</i> sp.)	20/3	15/3	65/7	1/1
Mice ( <i>Mus musculus</i> )			4/1	

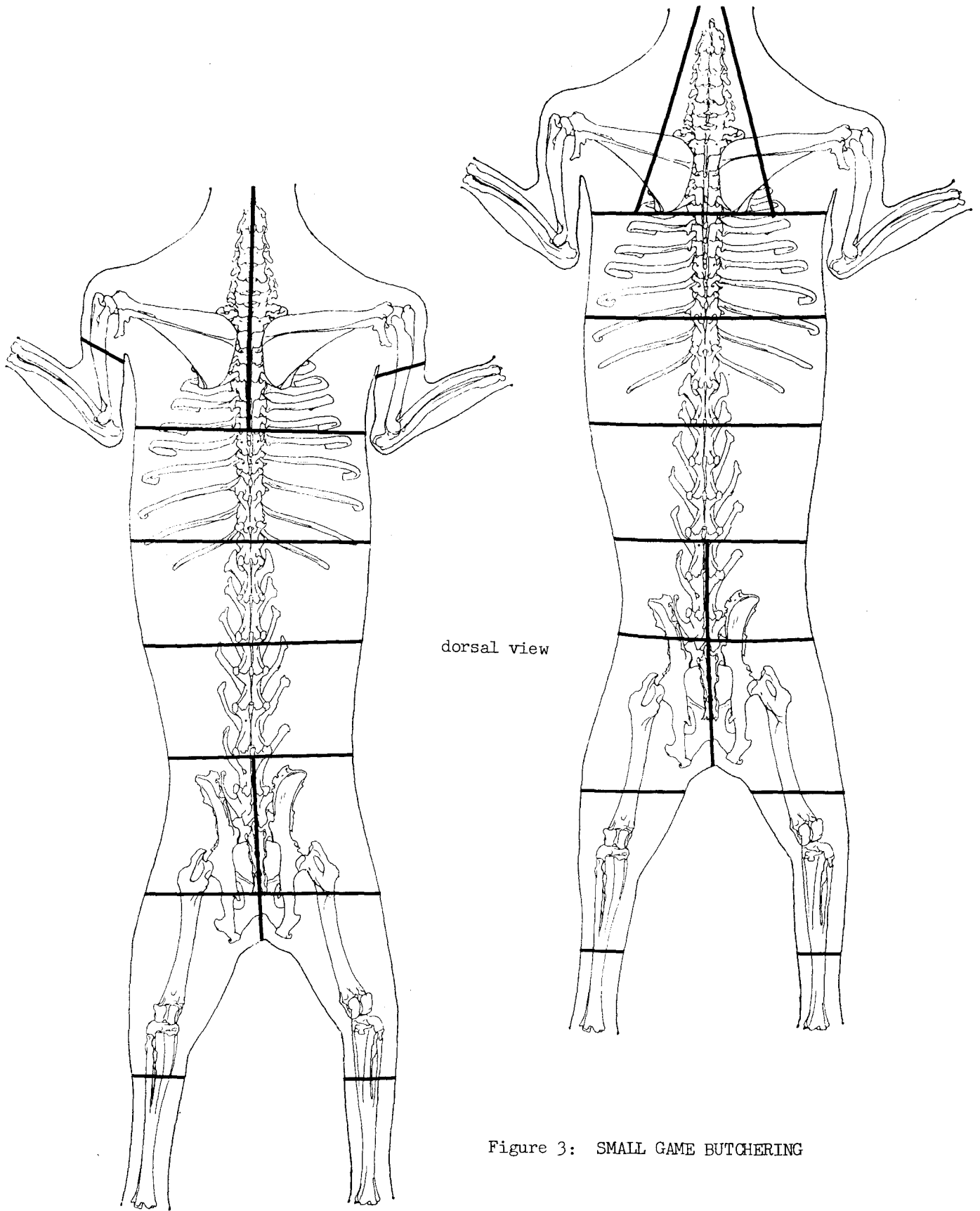


Figure 3: SMALL GAME BUTCHERING

## INQUILINES

Urban locales are noted for their excessive rodent populations, today as in the past. The early City of Sacramento was no exception, as noted in accounts of the period (Borthwick 1948; Meyer 1938). Rat bones were recovered from every feature analyzed (see table 3.3), providing physical evidence of their abundance. The disproportionately high number of rats recovered from Feature 15 likely resulted from the fact that this feature appears to have been open for some time; mammal, bird, and fish bones recovered from it bear extensive rodent gnawing marks.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The cuisine offered by the Golden Eagle Hotel and Cronin's Golden Eagle Oyster Saloon was sampled by archaeological recovery of food remains from birds and fish, in addition to mammals (see Schulz, this volume; Simons, this volume). The relative frequencies of these meat sources from the Golden Eagle and Cronin's are summarized in table 3.4. Meat from domestic mammals is overwhelmingly dominant in both enterprises. There are more total birds represented at the Golden Eagle Hotel, but the amounts of domestic birds are nearly equal. Given the fact that chickens and turkeys were twice as expensive as game birds in the 1860-1880 period (Simons 1980), it would appear that the two restaurants were on par economically. The presence of many blackbird bones in the hotel deposits indicates that, as was typical of prestigious restaurants, French-style cooking was practiced. Indeed, in 1860, the time period to which the Golden Eagle deposits are dated, the chef was one George Dupree, who listed France as his country of origin in the Sacramento City Directory (Edith Pitti personal communication 1980). There are more fish represented at Cronin's than at the hotel, but this may not be surprising for a restaurant specializing in oysters.

Rabbits are also represented in greater number at Cronin's. Of special interest is the curious presence of ground squirrels in the oyster saloon deposits. It is unlikely that ground squirrel meat was offered regularly. While they may have been utilized as rabbit substitutes, as noted previously, it is equally possible that the ground squirrels were a merchandising gimmick. Research on restauranteers of the day indicates that unusual food items (e.g., muskrat) were sometimes advertised to draw in new customers and increase business.

Comparisons of bills of fare from 19th-century Sacramento dining spots (Askin 1978) with banquet menus from the Golden Eagle Hotel (appendix 3.1) provides additional insights. Most of the menus in Askin's collection are from small restaurants catering to working-class and middle-class clientele. There is great similarity among their offerings--mostly beef, mutton, and pork entrees. A few list items such as chicken or jackrabbit stew, but none advertises squirrel dishes. The Golden Eagle Hotel menus contrast greatly with these. Among the outstanding differences are the high number of chicken and turkey dishes, the elegant cuts of meat, and the presence on the menus of pate de foie gras from Strasbourg, an area long noted for a particularly fine product. The wines

TABLE 3.4

## Relative Contributions of Dietary Components

	Golden Eagle Hotel				Cronin's Oyster Saloon			
	Feature 20 wt.	Feature 8 wt.	Total wt.	percent	Feature 15 wt.	Feature 6 wt.	Total wt.	percent
Beef <sup>1</sup>	82	515	597	62	148	432	580	53
Mutton <sup>1</sup>	42	129	171	18	94	35	129	12
Pork <sup>1</sup>	41	57	98	10	131	80	211	19
Rabbit <sup>2</sup>		4	4	1	20	2	22	2
Ground Squirrel <sup>2</sup>					9		9	1
Chicken <sup>3</sup>	3	2	5	1	14	2	16	1
Turkey <sup>3</sup>		20	20	2	20		20	2
Wild ducks <sup>2</sup>	27	4	31	3	11	2	13	1
Wild geese <sup>2</sup>		12	12	1	4		4	1
Quail <sup>2</sup>					1		1	1
Pigeons <sup>2</sup>					1		1	1
Blackbirds <sup>3</sup>	1		1	1				
Large fish <sup>3</sup>	30		30	3	60	15	75	7
Small fish <sup>3</sup>					17		17	1
			969	99+%			1098	99+%
			lbs.				lbs.	

<sup>1</sup>Meat weight of minimum butchering units using Lyman (1979b).

<sup>2</sup>Meat weight of minimum numbers of individuals using White (1953).

<sup>3</sup>Meat weight of minimum numbers of individuals using estimates appropriate for the 19th century.

listed also indicate the Golden Eagle's high status. Château Lafitte, St. Christoly, Verzeney, and Piper Heidsieck were among the finest red wines and champagnes of the time (Betty Rivers personal communication 1980).

In conclusion, the faunal evidence emphasizes and reaffirms historical information on the status of the Golden Eagle Hotel and indicates an approximately equivalent position for W. Cronin's Golden Eagle Oyster Saloon.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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We would like to laud here the efforts of the Sonoma State University archaeologists who took a mere hour of instruction, added many more of hard work, and dealt very competently with the tedious tasks of sorting and cataloguing the bone.

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APPENDIX 3.1

Golden Eagle Hotel Banquet Menus

(Originals at the California State Library)

Masonic Banquet,  
given by the members of  
SACRAMENTO COMMANDRY, No. 2, KNIGHTS TEMPLAR,  
TO  
Stockton Commandry, No. 6,  
Saturday Evening, August 21<sup>st</sup>, 1869.

Bill of Fare,  
prepared by D.E. Callahan, of the Golden Eagle Hotel, Sacramento.

FISH.

Cold Salmon - - Tartar Sauce.

Salad de Homard.

ENTREE DISHES.

Mayonize of Chicken.  
Gelatin de Vollileaux Truff.  
Boned Turkey a la Jelly.

Pattie de Foi Gras a la Strazburg.  
Beef Tongues a la Belvieu.  
Westphalia Hams Decore.

ROASTS.

Pig - - Japanese Style.

Turkeys and Chickens.

Saddle of Southdown Mutton - - Currant Jelly.

CAKES.

Swiss Marengoes.  
Sponge Cakes.  
Lady Fingers.  
Charlotte Russe.

Marengoes a la Cream.  
Pyramids of Macroons. Ornamental Kisses.  
Croquets. Water Jumbles.  
Sherry Jelly. Jelly Tartlets.

FRUIT.

Peaches. Pears.  
Almonds. Filberts.

Figs. Grapes. Walnuts.  
Raisins.  
Mottoes.

Vanilla Ice Cream

GRAND COMPLIMENTARY BANQUET,

Tendered the Officers of the

CENTRAL PACIFIC RAILROAD,

By the Citizens of Sacramento

AT THE GOLDEN EAGLE HOTEL.

D.E. Callahan . . . . . Proprietor  
September 28th, 1869

DINNER BILL OF FARE

Oysters, . . . . . On Half Shell.  
SOUPS.

Sauterne.  
Green turtle.

Colbert.

ORDUVRE.

Amontilla la Sherry  
Stuffed Olives.

Anchovies a Churle.

Salmon Genoise.

FISH.

Tenderloin of Sole a la Normande.

RELEVEES.

Chateau Bertram.  
Chateau Rersessac.  
Chapona a la Monterron.

Saddle of Mutton, English Style.

Bouche de ame a la Rein.

COLD DISHES.

Chateau Lafitte.  
Boned Turkey on Sucle.  
Pattey of Quail de Chartare.

Pattey de Foi Gras, Strasbourg.  
Westphalia Ham decordee with jelly.

Chicken Salad a la Italian.

ENTREES.

St. Christaly.  
Tenderloin of Beef a la Renaissance.  
Quail, Beffore Style.  
Noide of Veal a la Conti.

Sweet Breads tarded a la St. Cloud.  
Supreme of Chicken.  
Tame Ducks of Rouand.

Punch a la Romaine.

VEGETABLES.

Green Peas.  
String Beans.

Baked Sweet Potatoes.

Stewed Tomatoes. Lima Beans.

ROAST.

Chateau de Francis.  
Stuffed Turkey a la Chevaliere.

Ribs of Beef.

Ham-Champagne Sauce.

GAME.

Teal Ducks with Currant Jelly.

Saddle of Venison with Currant Jelly.

ORNAMENTAL DISHES.

Verzeney.  
Piper Heidsick.  
Horn of Plenty.  
Pyramid of Macaroons.

Croquant of Oranges.  
Charlotte Russe.  
Locomotive Stanford.

Ice Cream Pyramids.  
Gra Gateaux of Savole.

DESSERT.

English Plum Pudding - St. Croix Sauce.

Macedon of Fruit with Jelly Maraskea.

Oranges.  
Grapes.  
Coffee.

Assorted Cakes.  
Apples.  
Peaches.

Raisins.  
Cantelope.  
Liquers.

Figs.  
Watermelons.

Almonds.  
Pears.



COMPLIMENTARY DINNER

To

GEN. U. S. GRANT,  
Sacramento, Oct. 22, 1879,

AT

Golden Eagle Hotel.

F.A. Hornblower, Proprietor.

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MENU

---

Eastern Oysters, on Half Shell.

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SOUPS.

Terrapin.

Chicken

---

FISH.

Salmon a la Chambord.

Brook Trout, Madeira Sauce.

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ORNAMENTAL DISHES.

Chicken Fricassee.  
Chicken Saute, Mushroom Sauce.  
Fricassee of Veal, with Green Peas.  
Stewed Rabbit, Wine Sauce.  
Chicken Liver Brochet a la Maitre d'Hotel.

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ROAST.

Turkey, stuffed with Truffles.  
Spring Chicken au Cresson.  
English Ham, Champagne Sauce.

Spring Lamb.  
English Sirloin of Beef.

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GAME

Quail on Toast.  
Saddle of Venison, Jelly Sauce.  
Canvasback Duck, a la Orange.

English Snipe.

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COLD DISHES.

Boned Turkey, with Jelly.  
Smoked Tongue, en Bellevue.  
Decorated Whittaker Ham.

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SWEET DISHES.

Imperial Pudding, Claret Sauce.  
English Plum Pudding, Hard Sauce.

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FRUITS.

Grapes Apples.

Oranges.

Peaches.

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DESSERT.

Charlotte Russe, a la Chantilly.  
Wine Jelly.  
Ice Cream, a la Vanilla.

Blanc Mange.

Orange Ice.

Strawberries and Cream.  
Assorted Ornamented Cakes.

