



PHOTOGRAPHER: unidentified

SITTERS: **MAXIMA ANTONIA YNITIA (1841-1901) & MARIA ANTONIA YNITIA (1845-1925)**

DATE: c. 1865

FORMAT: photographic reprint

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This double portrait, taken around 1865 by an unidentified photographer, depicts two sisters, Maxima Antonia Ynitia and Maria Antonia Ynitia, members of a prominent Coast Miwok family.

Their grandfather was Aurelio Inutia, a chief of the Coast Miwok Tribe. In 1775, when Europeans sent an exploring party into his territory, he welcomed them, and, influenced by their building techniques, constructed the first adobe home north of the Presidio. It was located at Olompali, just south of present day Petaluma.

Maxima and Maria's parents were Camilo and Cayetana Ynitia. Camilo Ynitia (1803 - 1856) was known as the last Hoipu, or headman, of the Miwok Olompali community. In 1836 he signed a peace treaty with General Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo aligning the people of Olompali with the Mexican government. As a consequence, in 1843 Camilo was deeded the Rancho Olompali land grant. Camilo expanded the adobe home built by his father, and its ruins are now within the Olompali State Historic Park.

Maxima Antonia was married three times. She married her first husband at the age of 13, and, by her second husband, bore 13 children. Maria Antonia married Joseph Knox and with him bore two children. After the death of their father, the sisters purchased a part of the Rancho Sanel in Mendocino County, and they were instrumental in establishing the town of Sanel, which later was renamed Hopland.

In their portrait, both sisters are depicted standing and directly facing the viewer. They are dressed similarly in basque styled bodices and skirts with self-flounced hems bordered with a bias band. We are not certain which of the women is Maxima Antonia and which is Maria Antonia; however, the woman on the viewer's left places her hand on her sister's shoulder in a gesture that might be interpreted as that of the elder sibling.