

## HOMELESS IN PARADISE

March 12-18, 2021

### MONTEREY PENINSULA MAKEOVERS - Part 11

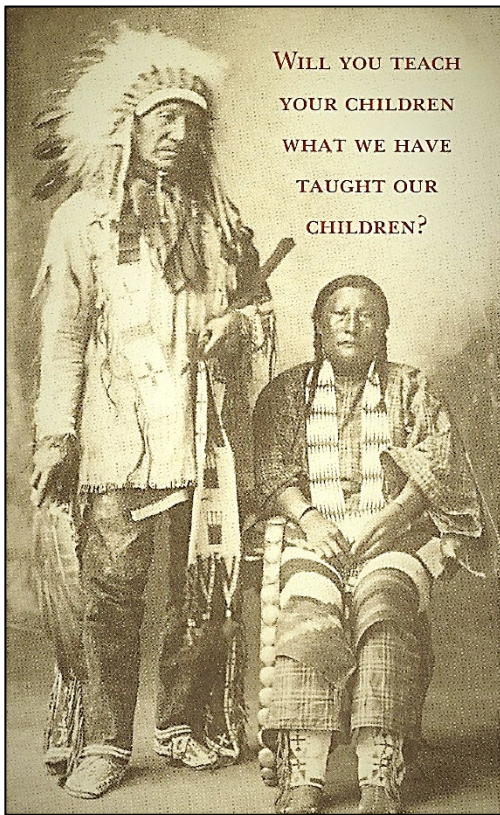


Photo of American Horse the Younger with Wife, by Edward Sheriff Curtis courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of the American Indian (from 1994 introductory catalog). March 2021 is membership-drive month. <https://americanindian.si.edu/>

oglala sioux chief  
survived europe's incursion  
as indian scout

"american horse"  
joined "buffalo bill's wild west"  
served like circus clown

"don't fight them, join them"  
tactic sacrificed spirit  
but it spared the tribe

history repeats  
here in california  
juristac's at risk

can amah mutsun  
save their sacred tribal grounds  
just west of gilroy

white supremacy  
threatens to strip tribal band  
of historic rights

if you don't agree  
gravel mine should be allowed  
sign petition now

[www.protectjuristac.org](http://www.protectjuristac.org)

## WHAT CAN YOU DO TO RESTORE NATIVE AMERICANS' INDIGENALITY?

By Wanda Sue Parrott

**BEING** homeless along the coast of California isn't new. If history books told the true story, you'd have learned in elementary school that first homeless Californians were indigenous people uprooted by Spanish Catholic monks of the Franciscan Order.

Between 1769 and 1833, under the aegis of Spanish viceroys, the traveling monks and their forced-labor crews erected 21 missions over a 600-mile stretch of space between San Diego and Sonoma. Most were less than 11 miles inland.

Today their tourist-mecca route is gilded as "El Camino Real", aka The King's Highway. Then, the traveling builders used existent native trails that often were mere dusty footpaths. Because they could travel a maximum of only 30 miles per day, the missions were situated where the weary workers rested and/or died overnight.

In fact, the native labor force in the west was as enslaved by the Catholic Church as were field hands and household servants from Africa who were bought and sold by whites in the east. The Native Americans not only lost freedom to live with nature, they built missions in which they were domiciled during enforced conversion to Christianity.

Besides making them homeless while ostensibly saving their souls, many tribes were all-but-exterminated by the Spaniards (and later Mexicans) who controlled them. By 1849, the incursion of 300,000 Europeans during the gold rush wiped out any chances the indigenous people had of regaining their sovereignty and the soil they considered sacred and which they tended as stewards.

### **The Mission Oxymoron**

Succinctly put, the indigenous “heathens” were “saved” by the institutions that exterminated and almost extincted them!

According to Access Genealogy’s website, “Salinan Indians, a linguistic stock about which little is known, were from parts of San Luis Obispo, San Benito and Monterey counties. . .

“The missions of San Antonio and San Miguel were established in Salinan territory in 1771 and 1797. The total baptisms at these missions reached 4,400 and 2,400 respectively, and it appears that these numbers included Yokuts.

“Like all the other tribes, the Salinan Indians decreased rapidly during mission times, the number. . . having fallen to fewer than 700 by 1831, and more rapidly after secularization.

“At present their total number is perhaps 20, most of them near Jolon.”

For details, visit <https://accessgenealogy.com/california/salinan-family.htm>.

### **The Indigenous Survivors**

A handful of survivors exists from tribal bands that helped build San Carlos Cathedral in Monterey, Carmel Mission and Mission San Juan Bautista. They included the Ohlone-Costanoans, Rumsens (southern Costanoans aka southern Ohlones) and Esselens, each distinguished by its family of languages. According to The Esselen Tribe of Monterey County website:

“The men and their families were all separated like cattle and not allowed to speak their native languages or to practice their ancient cultural practices. . .

“There is evidence of habitation sites so remote in the Santa Lucias that they are hard to locate today. Thankfully, some of the captured Esselen survived this tragedy and continued to survive until the Spanish Missions fell into disuse after the Mexican Revolution.”

The estimated original 300,000+ indigenous population of California had shrunk to around 10,000 by 1970.

Details at <https://accessgenealogy.com/california/esselens-indian-tribal-history.htm>.

The true story of America’s indigenous people began its monumental historic revision in 1994 with the Smithsonian Institution’s opening of the National Museum of the American Indian. <https://americanindian.si.edu>.

### **Indian Survival 21st-Century Style**

Has the survival of California’s indigenous peoples been the result of their capitulation to their oppressors, as Lakota Sioux Chief American Horse did, by joining them instead of fighting them?

Through performance in full Indian gear with Buffalo Bill Cody’s traveling Wild West extravaganza, American Horse saved his tribal band from extinction.

The Wild West shows ran from 1883 through 2013.

Whether Chief American Horse the Younger was a savage, star or a freak in the eyes of the public is unknown. He was born in 1840 in the Black Hills of South Dakota, died in 1908 on the Pine Ridge Reservation, and attended the famous Carlisle School in Pennsylvania which performed non-religiously in the east the task the monks tried to do in California: strip away their natives' indigeneity.

Today's descendants of the indigenous people, who lost their freedom in 1890 when most tribal members were consigned to reservations, have adapted to 21<sup>st</sup>-century life along with the majority of non-indigenous people, by communication via cell phone and computer literacy.

Next week's column will explore a chapter-in-progress of area Native American history known by the working title "Protect Juristac." It's a campaign spearheaded by the Amah Mutsun tribal band of Santa Clara County. They're gathering signatures on a petition to stop the desecration of their sacred land by its non-Indian owner who wants county approval to turn the pristine hillside acreage west of Gilroy into a gravel mine.

Interested in helping rewrite American history? Visit <http://www.protectjuristac.org>.

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### **CREDITS:**

Edward Sheriff Curtis photo layout courtesy of National Museum of the American Indian (1994).

haiku septet caption by Wanda Sue Parrott

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"Homeless in Paradise" is a free public service self-funded and produced by independent journalist Wanda Sue Parrott. It appears in Facebook, Nextdoor, and *The Cedar Street Times* at [www.cedarstreettimes.com](http://www.cedarstreettimes.com) and on private email lists. If interested in being added to the list, submit your request to 831-899-5887, [amykitchenerfdn@hotmail.com](mailto:amykitchenerfdn@hotmail.com). Copyright 2021 by Wanda Sue Parrott.